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*S. Juncos Prime*







SAMUEL IRENÆUS PRIME.

**Autobiography and Memorials.**

EDITED BY HIS SON,

WENDELL PRIME.



NEW YORK:

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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SAMUEL IRENÆUS PRIME, the son of the Rev. Nathaniel Scudder Prime, D.D., and Julia Ann Jermain, his wife, was born at Ballston, N. Y., Nov. 4, 1812. In his infancy, the parents of Irenæus removed to Cambridge, Washington County, N. Y., where he spent his boyhood, his father being pastor of the Presbyterian Church known as "the Old White Meeting-house."

When not yet fourteen years old he entered Williams College, and was graduated in 1829, before he was seventeen. After three years spent in teaching, he studied theology in the Seminary at Princeton, and was licensed to preach in 1833, his first sermon being preached in Bedford, Westchester County, N. Y. In 1835 he was ordained and installed pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, N. Y., where

he remained a year, resigning on account of his health. In 1837, while teaching in Newburgh, N. Y., he became pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Matteawan, Dutchess County, N. Y., where he remained three years, again resigning in consequence of ill-health.

In 1840 he became editor of "The New York Observer," removing to New York City, and soon after to Newark, N. J. In 1850 he removed to Brooklyn, N. Y., where he resided until 1858, when he became a resident of New York City. In 1858 Dr. Prime became a proprietor of the paper of which he had been the editor since 1840, with the exception of the year 1849, in which he was one of the secretaries of the American Bible Society, and the year 1850, during which he was an editor of "The Presbyterian." His editorial work and varied activities continued until within a few days of his death, which occurred in Manchester, Vt., July 18, 1885. An influential editor, an able preacher, an indefatigable and judicious man of affairs, he was pre-eminently a popular and useful writer, whose name and person have been widely known and greatly loved during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

After my father's death I found among his papers a few letters, ready for publication, prefaced with the following note:—

## CHRISTMAS EVE, 1880.

It is my purpose, life and health permitting, to write a series of papers, being "recollections of other years."

They are designed to lie *unpublished* until my connection with "The New York Observer" is closed. By that event they will pass into the hands of those who may use them as a series of "Irenæus Letters."

S. IRENÆUS PRIME.

My disappointment on finding that only a few of these papers had been prepared was relieved by finding a large folio note-book in which my father had written personal recollections, extending to the time of his entrance upon his life-work on "The New York Observer." From the first few pages of this autograph note-book he had prepared the first few letters of the series in contemplation. It was a matter of little difficulty for me to prepare a continuous autobiographical narrative from the remainder of the book, all of which was printed in "The New York Observer" during the year 1886.

It is this series of papers which forms Part First of these memoirs.

WENDELL PRIME.





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**Part First.**

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.



# AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MEMORIALS

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## Part First.

### AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

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#### I.

#### MY PARENTS AND ANCESTORS.

SAG HARBOR.—NATHANIEL SCUDDER PRIME.—JULIA ANN JERMAIN.—BENJAMIN YOUNG PRIME.—EBENEZER PRIME, HUNTINGTON, LONG ISLAND.

**I**N the year 1807, in summer time, a party of young ladies and gentlemen were bathing in the surf on the beach at East Hampton, on the east end of Long Island. In the midst of the frolic which they were enjoying in the water, a cry was suddenly raised that one of the young ladies was drowning. She had been swept beyond her depth by a retiring wave, and was unable to recover her footing. The whole party were panic-stricken, and not one had sufficient presence of mind, with physical ability, to rescue the one in peril of her life.

On the beach a young man, comparatively a stranger, was walking. He was a clergyman who had, not long before, come to the village of Sag Harbor, where the

party belonged. He had come over to East Hampton for his own pleasure, and not to join the young people who were now in the surf. But he heard the cry of distress, and comprehending the case in an instant, he ran to the water, throwing off his coat as he ran. He was a strong swimmer, a powerful athlete, bold and brave. He plunged into the waves, "accoutred as he was," sought the drowning girl, and bore her safely and proudly to the shore. She was soon restored to consciousness, and was carried home by her companion. The gallant young man who had saved her from drowning became her best friend. The friendship grew into love, which resulted in marriage; and among the first-fruits of the union was the writer of these words.

That is the story. I asked my mother, when she was more than seventy years old, if it was a true story. She did not deny it, but put me off with a playful answer that satisfied me of its substantial correctness. It is in harmony with the nature and power of my father, Nathaniel Scudder Prime, who was a hero in action under every condition of life, and possessed of the will and the physique that fitted him to be the leader of every party to which he belonged. If there was a fire in the village, the whole community would look to him to take the command as naturally as they would to have him lead their devotions in the church.

Sag Harbor is near the eastern end of Long Island. There my mother, Julia Ann Jermain, was born, and there she grew to womanhood, the daughter of a well-known merchant of that great whaling seaport. She was just the loveliest woman of her day and generation, as every man's mother is; she was beautiful as the dawn of a summer morn, gentle but firm, calm in all the vicis-

situdes of a life of care and change and trial, — as nearly a “perfect woman” as was ever called “mother.”

When I was about forty years old, and sitting at my work in the office in New York, a stranger entered, and, without introduction or even mentioning his name, said to me: —

“I have come in to see you whom I know very well, though you do not know me. About forty years ago I was going up the Hudson River on a sloop, for in those days there were no steamboats or railroads. When we were in Tappan Sea we were overtaken by a violent storm, and the passengers, of whom there were several on board, were greatly alarmed lest we should be capsized. In the midst of the excitement a young and beautiful woman stood in the midst of us and said: ‘In God’s hands we are as safe on the water as on the land.’ Those words calmed the excitement, and we waited in hope till the storm abated. The lovely woman who thus proved our comforter in danger afterward became your mother! Her words have been my motto all the years since. I have watched your life and marked every step you have taken, always keeping in mind the lesson I learned from the lips that taught your infant lips to pray.”

Having said these pleasant words, the stranger left me, and I have never to my knowledge seen him or heard from him since. I asked my mother about it, and she remembered the time, the voyage, the storm, the excitement, but her own composure was so habitual that it was not memorable. In the month of August, 1812, that journey was made, and I was born on the fourth day of November, in the same year. (See Psalm 139: 12-13.)

These incidents in the lives of my parents illustrate the traits of character that distinguished them, each and both. My father was a man of strong will, immense energy, dauntless courage, inflexible in the right and afraid of nothing out of heaven but of being wrong. My mother was sweet, amiable, tender, loving, never speaking loud, overflowing with sympathy, delicate in form, frame, and appearance, winning all hearts to herself, full of playful humor, with an appreciation of pleasantry and wit that made her a delightful companion and friend. He was as fond of the sports of his children as they were of playing ball with him. Abounding in anecdote, jovial at table, with a voice so loud as to be easily heard over all the house, he was the best company boys ever had. Huntington is near the middle of Long Island, and there my father was born. His father, Benjamin Young Prime, was a good physician, a great scholar, who wrote verse as well as prose in many languages, — French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and Greek. His patriotic songs were written to inspire the hearts of the “Sons of Liberty” when the war of the Revolution began. Some of them are preserved in the “Collections of Early American Literature,” edited by Griswold and by Duyckinck. He went abroad to study medicine, and attended lectures in London and Edinburgh, and afterwards went to the Continent and took his medical degree at Leyden. His thesis in Latin delivered on that occasion was printed, and a gentleman travelling in Europe a few years ago found a copy of it handsomely bound lying on a street book-stand, and bought it for me. His father, my great-grandfather, was the Rev. Ebenezer Prime, minister of the church in Huntington through sixty years. He came from Milford, Conn., to

that charge in 1719, being descended from one of the three brothers Prime from England, who settled in Rowley, Mass., about 1640.

My great-grandfather died during the Revolutionary War, in 1779. He was an ardent patriot. And as the Church of Rome persecuted the bones of Wycliffe, who escaped the fires of martyrdom in the flesh, so my ancestor in his grave suffered the penalty of his patriotism. My father, in his "History of Long Island," gives this account of the treatment to which his grandfather's property was subjected by the British troops in Huntington: —

"When the troops first entered the town, the officers housed their horses in the pastor's stable, and littered them with sheaves of unthreshed wheat, while they cursed the 'old rebel,' as they were pleased to call him. They then took possession of his house for their quarters, breaking the furniture which they did not need, tearing leaves out of his most valuable books, or entirely destroying one volume of a set, as if to render them valueless without taking the trouble to destroy the whole."

And again he writes: "The seats in the house of God were torn up and the building converted into a military depot. And to wound the feelings of the inhabitants most deeply, the church was pulled down, and barracks built of the timbers in the centre of the burying-ground. The graves were levelled and the tombstones used for building their fireplaces and ovens. I have often heard old men testify that they had seen the loaves of bread drawn out of these ovens with the reversed inscriptions of the tombstones of their friends on the lower crust."

The leader of the troops who thus inhabited the tombs

in Huntington was Colonel Benjamin Thompson. He afterwards became the famous Count Rumford, of Leyden-Jar memory. He had his own tent pitched at the head of my great-grandfather's grave, that, to use his own words, "every time he went in or out he might tread on the old rebel."



## II.

### MY FATHER'S COLLEGE LIFE.

NATHANIEL SCUDDER.—SAMUEL STANHOPE SMITH.—MINISTERS' FAMILIES.—JUDGE WILLIAM STRONG.

**I**N the year 1801 my father entered Nassau Hall, as it was then called, at Princeton, N. J. Though but sixteen years old, he became a member of the Sophomore class, and took high rank with such men as Theodore Frelinghuysen, and J. R. Ingersoll, who entertained me in London in 1853, when he was United States minister to England. My father's given name was Nathaniel Scudder, which he received from Dr. Scudder, of New Jersey, who was a very dear friend in college of my grandfather, who was graduated at Princeton in the year 1751. In the graveyard in the woods, near the old Tennent church, in Freehold, N. J., is a tombstone with an inscription, in memory of Dr. Nathaniel Scudder, who was killed in the battle of Monmouth. That was the man whose name my father bore. But as he was never pleased with the name, he would not impose it on any of his five sons,—in my case preferring to go into the Old Testament, among the prophets, for one name, and to the fathers of the early Church for another.

One of the servants waiting upon the college students, was a colored boy named Peter Scudder, who had been a slave in the Scudder family of Princeton,

Having the name himself that my father had, and belonging to the family with whom my father was thus connected, the boy attracted the young and pious student's attention. My father had been "born again" the year before he went to college. He found that Peter could not read, and had received very little religious instruction. Encouraging him to come to his room when his work for the day was done, my father gave the lad daily lessons, till he became able to read intelligently, and in the meantime the teachings of his young tutor were made effectual in his conversion. I have often heard my father relate, with tears, the remarkable experience of this colored boy, the clear evidence he gave of genuine conversion, and of his romantic devotion to his young friend.

Thirty years after this event I entered the seminary at Princeton to study theology. Long before this had I forgotten all about Peter Scudder, and I had no thought of his being still among the living at Princeton. The first day of my residence in the seminary, a colored man came in to make up my bed. I asked him his name, and he said "PETER SCUDDER."

"How long have you been in the seminary?"

"A great many years, and I used to wait on the students in the college before I came here to the seminary."

"Do you remember Nathaniel Scudder Prime?"

"Indeed I do! he taught me to read; I got religion from him; he told me how to come to the Lord Jesus Christ; I shall never forget Massa Prime."

"I am his son."

He was awe-struck. He did not at first seem to get hold of it rightly, — it confused him; but when the idea

fairly took possession of his mind he gave way to extravagant demonstrations of joy, gratitude, and wonder. He wept, and he laughed.

“And he is yet alive?” he inquired; and he loved to hear me speak of all his young friend's life-work, and his remembrance of Peter Scudder. Peter was now the father of a family in the village, and I visited them afterwards, to their great enjoyment. Peter was more than my servant, he was my brother in the Lord.

The president of the college when my father was a student was Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith. Many anecdotes of him were the entertainment of my boyhood. One is worth writing. The president was greatly annoyed by the frequent trespass of the hog of one of his neighbors, that would get into his garden. The animal belonged to a poor widow, who tried hard to keep him at home, but he often broke out of hers into the grounds of the president. He sent her fair warning again and again that he should have to kill that hog if he was found in his garden again. But warnings were in vain. One day, and sad to say, it was the Lord's day, Sam, the doctor's servant, brought word to the president, that “dat dare hog was in de garden.” The better the day, the better the deed, and the Doctor told Sam to come out with the big knife, and they would make an end of the business. It was in the heat of summer, and to kill a hog at such a time was to waste the pork, for it could not be kept long enough to be honestly consumed. But the time for reason or pity was past. Sam caught the pig, which set up such a squealing as to alarm the widow in her cottage. She flew to the garden, and taking in the

situation at a glance, implored the Doctor to spare the victim now at his mercy.

"In with the knife, Sam," cried the overheated divine, and the fatal lunge was made. The life-blood fattened the soil of the garden.

The Doctor, feeling better now it was over, began to chide the widow, and at the same time to console her on the loss of her hog.

"O, la, it ain't my hog, Doctor, it's *yourn*," and sure enough, in their haste and excitement, neither the Doctor nor Sam had noticed that they were killing their own pig in the middle of summer.

The yellow fever was raging in the city of New York in the year 1804, the year of my father's graduation. It was not considered safe to pass through the city, and he sailed from Elizabeth Port to Brooklyn, on his way home to Huntington, Long Island. All his college furniture, bed, books, etc., were boxed to be sent after him. They went into New York, and lost their way, — the name on the address being misunderstood, — into the loft of the banking-house of Nathaniel Prime, the founder of the house long known in the commercial world, and which was afterward Prime, Ward, King, & Co. Although the banker and my father bore the same first name, they were not related except as they were descended from the father of the three brothers in Rowley. The banker's family is still perpetuated in New York. The college goods were never recovered. When search was made for them, after the yellow fever was over, it was found that they had gone apart, and my father always mourned the loss of his mother's Bible, worth to him more than all the rest.

My father was left fatherless when only six years old.

The care of him devolved on his mother, who lived ninety years and eight months. She had very small means and a large family. She was the mother of seven children, of whom my father was the youngest. Unaided, she gave them a good education, and my father having seen what one brave woman could do for herself and children, cherished the same spirit of self-reliance under the help of God, and did for his children what was done for him. He had an intense conviction that it is better for the man, and better for church, and the world, that candidates for the learned professions, especially for the ministry, should help themselves, rather than be supported by charity.

A few years ago I was travelling in company with the Hon. William Strong, who has recently resigned his seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. We were then going from Brooklyn to Philadelphia on a mission from the Presbyterian General Assembly, and were discussing the systems of ministerial education, and the support of candidates. I remarked: —

“My father was a country minister; his salary never exceeded six hundred dollars. He had five sons and two daughters; to all his sons he gave collegiate and professional education, and to his daughters the best opportunities. And he never had a dollar to help him, or one of his children, that he did not earn.”

Judge Strong answered: “My father was a country minister, and the only difference between his experience and your father's was, that he had ELEVEN children, for whom he did the same.”

### III.

#### MY BIRTHPLACE.

BALLSTON CENTRE. — REV. STEPHEN PORTER. — MILTON,  
CAMBRIDGE, N. Y.

YOU can go to any place in the world from Long Island, except to the North Pole. Nobody has ever been there yet, even if he started from Long Island. John Ledyard, the "Great American Traveller," as he was once called, who went to Africa and everywhere, was a kinsman of mine on my grandmother's side of the house, — her name was Wheelwright. Ledyard came to Long Island to see my grandmother before he set out on those remarkable travels ended by his early death.

In the summer of 1812 my father left Long Island. The Presbytery had earnestly besought him to stay and wait, as he often afterwards said, "for dead men's shoes," — that is, for some one to die whose place he might take. But he was too enterprising and earnest to wait. The Rev. Stephen Porter, who married my mother's sister, had been settled in the ministry at Ballston Centre, Saratoga County, N. Y. He wrote that a small congregation in the adjoining town of Milton was without a pastor, and on receiving an invitation from the church to come to them, my father and mother, with two children, set off from the Island to begin the world anew. It was more of a journey then than it is now.

Their household goods were not many or great, but they must all go with them. By sloop to New York, and then by sloop to Albany, that was the rapid transit of those pre-steamer times. It was on this voyage up the river that my mother, then a delicate, lovely young mother, spoke peace to the troubled hearts of the passengers in the midst of the storm.

It came to pass in those days that Mr. Porter, the pastor at Ballston, dwelt in a large house across the way from the church in which he preached the word. But in all the parish of Milton there was not a house or part of a house to be had, in which my parents and their children could lay their heads. And there were very urgent reasons why it was important that they should be comfortably housed before the cold weather set in; and it was now at hand. They were enjoying the hospitality of Brother Porter, as my father always called him, for so he was in a double and every sense; and when all house-hunting proved in vain, the conclusion was finally reached that for the present, at least, they must stay where they were.

Last summer (1880) while for a time at Saratoga Springs, I drove down to Old Ballston, ten miles south of Saratoga, with some of my children and grandchildren. Coming to the church and calling their attention to the mansion in front of it, surrounded with venerable trees, and wearing the appearance of age and comfort, I said to the family, "You see the house in which I was born." It is hard to get up any emotion, not to say interest, in such association, when everything looks as it did look fifty, sixty, or seventy years ago. It was just as good a place as any other to be born in. Then we drove over to Milton, six miles on our way back to Saratoga, by

another road. This was the road my father travelled back and forth, in wet and cold, to minister to a little flock in what was scarcely better than a wilderness. In less than two months after I was born, two vacant rooms were found in Milton, in a dilapidated, but inhabited house. And to them my mother, with her three children, was moved in the dead of winter. The two rooms had to serve for parlor, kitchen, and bedrooms for six. And so miserable was this house that I have heard my mother say she could see, through the cracks, the horses and sleighs going by, as I was lying in her arms. The snow was then two feet deep on the ground, and the thermometer had the habit of going to twenty-five and thirty degrees below zero. The measles and spotted fever prevailed in the neighborhood, but did not invade that divinely protected *home*. As my mother had been brought up tenderly, in the midst of abundance, the winds never being permitted to breathe roughly upon her, it is a wonder of mercy, exceeding any of the modern French or Irish miracles, that she did not succumb to those sufferings which attended my introduction to this "vale of tears." In the spring of the year 1813 my father was able to get a house to himself, and moved into it. But the people lacked the ability or the disposition to support a pastor. They promised, but did not pay. At this juncture, when the question came up, "What shall we do to live?" he was invited to preach in Cambridge, Washington County, N. Y., and very soon he received a call to come over into that region and settle. It was east of the Hudson River, about twenty-five miles from Milton. He was not long in making up his mind as to his line of duty. He accepted the call to Cambridge. The people over there determined to



make a sure thing of it, and came with teams to transport their new minister, bag and baggage, across the country. There was no very great amount of goods to be carried, but it was a long day's drive through very sandy roads and a wild country. The people made a "bee" of it, and coming one day in time to load up over night as far as possible, they set off early the next day, and landed all safe and sound before dark in the parish since known as that of the "Old White Meeting House."

My father had kept a horse and gig to pursue his pastoral work in Milton, and the two other children with the nurse being stowed away with the furniture in the wagons, and doubtless being cautioned as the sons of Jacob were by their father, "not to fall out by the way," my father and mother, with the infant in her arms, rode in the gig. This would not be worth such particular record but for the circumstance that attended it with danger to my life. In the midst of that day's journey, a hot day in midsummer, I was found to be overheated, and when they rested under the shade of a friendly tree, a rash came out all over me, attended with great irritation and suffering. It became a chronic ailment. The blood seemed to be permanently and injuriously affected by that day's exposure. Several fits of dangerous illness in after life were the immediate result of the sudden *striking in* of this eruption. And the amount of pain that I have endured no one now living, and no one but my mother, ever did know. Even unto manhood and down to gray hairs the ill effect of that day's ride continued. It may be that if I put the fact on this paper it will save some poor minister's boy from such an exposure.

It is not to be expected that I should have any very distinct recollections of that period of life which I passed in Ballston, which must be set down as my birthplace though I lived there less than two months. Nor do I remember more of Milton, where I resided precisely six months. But when the mature age of eight months had been attained I performed my second journey and became a resident of another town and county. So Cambridge has ever been to me as my native place, for here my childhood and youth were spent; here I began to go to school; here are all the ties that bind a boy to hills and brooks and groves; here were the early playmates, early loves, home and friends; and I know no other native land than old Cambridge. There life with me had its beginning, so far as memory goes; and I am quite sure that my last thoughts on earth, if they are turned backward on time, will rest there.

#### IV.

#### BEGINNING TO LEARN.

MY FATHER'S STUDY.—TOBACCO-SMOKE.—THE SCHOOLMASTER.—SCRIPTURE READINGS.

MY father had peculiar views in regard to the time when children should begin to learn to read. His first-born was a daughter, who was taught her letters as soon as she could speak. She was a good reader at three. On the day she was five years old, she repeated all the answers to the one hundred and eight questions in the Shorter Catechism, correctly. All the children learned that Catechism, and repeated portions of it every Sabbath evening, but no one of them learned it so soon in life as the eldest daughter did. But my father, who was a great teacher, and disposed to make experiments for the purpose of learning, did not find reason to believe it good to begin with children so soon as he began with the first or second child.

I was the third, and was not permitted to have a book in my hand until I was five years old. His theory was that the child would by that time have a real desire to learn, and would also have a measure of mental power to go onward with learning, steadily, from book to book, and year by year. What were my thoughts on the subject during these preliminary years of forced ignorance, I do not remember. Perhaps no

one goes farther back than his fifth year. But I do remember with the vividness of events of yesterday, the morning of the eventful day when I was five years old. My father's study was a wing of the house, — one room built on the end of the house, with no door but the outside one, from and to which we went by the way of the front piazza. This was a memorable piazza, too. A trap-door in the middle of it opened to the cellar, and one evening it was left open. I came in from the study, it was dark, and tripping along swiftly, plunged headlong into the cellar, cutting my head on the stone wall as I went down, and dividing the whole cheek on the edge of the lowest step. I was taken up for killed; but being kept awake all night lest if I went to sleep I should never wake, and being carefully nursed, I escaped permanent injury.

To this study we often resorted for instruction and reproof. The anxious father invited us there when he would *see us alone*; for it was a good idea of his that it is often better to reprove children privately than in the presence of their companions. Once he made a mistake with me. He thought I had told a lie. He was very much grieved, and labored to get from me a confession. He did not *punish* me, for I think he had an inner conviction, or perhaps it was only a hope, that I might not have been guilty. But he took me into the study, talked with me very seriously; and then kneeling with me, prayed very earnestly that God would forgive me. But as I *knew* that I had not been wicked in this matter, however bad a boy I might have been in other things, it seemed to me that as God knew I was innocent, this praying was quite out of place. There was to me, a very little child, something of the

ludicrous in praying for what could not possibly be granted, — the forgiveness of an innocent one.

But this study was strongly impressed on my senses by the odor of tobacco. My father was a great student and a great smoker. He smoked morning, noon and night, — all day, not all night, but far into the night. Having a long pipe, and being fond of reading in bed, he had his candle on a stand, and on the stand rested the bowl of his pipe, which he smoked, and filled, and smoked again. While writing sermons he was always smoking. His books and manuscripts were so impregnated with it, that they retained the unsavory odor years and years after they left this den. The only good that ever came of this smoking came to me. As to him, it well-nigh killed him in middle life. His head was affected. Vertigo seized him in the pulpit; he would forget what he had said. He gave up his pipe, and the vertigo did not return. But it is quite likely that in my childhood the smell of tobacco in such quantities made me sick; and to this I attribute the fact that I never tasted the weed in any shape or form. As most of my friends in social life are in the habit of smoking, and my tastes have made me a frequent guest with those who are fond of cigars, it would not have been strange had I fallen into the habit.

Into this smoke-stained study, on the morning of Nov. 4, 1817, I was called by my father. He put into my hands Marshall's Spelling Book, with my name written on the cover, — the three names in full. My first name was from the prophet Samuel, of Old Testament story; my second, the middle name, which I have chiefly used in later life, he gave me because he was fond of reading, in the old folio volume which he

inherited from his grandfather, the works of Irenæus, one of the early fathers of the church, a disciple of Polycarp, who was the disciple of John the Evangelist. That Irenæus became a Bishop of Lyons, in France, suffered martyrdom there, and a church built on the spot bears his name to this day.

My full name, with the date, being written in the book, which was the first one I had ever been permitted to take, I marched off to school with the other children, as proud as a peacock. I can remember distinctly when I first stood in front of John Alden, the schoolmaster. That is the right word for him, he was master as well as teacher, and a tyrant, too; and he pointed to the letter at the head of the alphabet, and said, "That's A." I said, "A," — and so on till the alphabet was "mastered" and learned.

And this reminds me: Fifty years after this day, I went into the office of a notary in New York to make affidavit to a document. Having signed my name, which by this time was somewhat known in the city, the notary, a stranger to me, said: —

"No, that's not *your* name, is it?"

"Certainly it is, and pray, why not?"

"Well, now," said he, "that reminds me of the man who did not learn his letters when a child, and beginning to learn when grown up, refused to believe it was 'A' when his teacher told him its name. 'Well,' he replied, 'I've *heern* tell of "A" all my life, but I never *seed* it afore.'"

I finally convinced the notary that I was the man, at least so much that he took his fee.

The rule in our family was that each child should learn to read in three months, so as to be able to take

his turn in reading the Bible at morning family prayers. The parents each read a verse, and the children in order, every one bringing his Bible. The little ones, like young birds trying their wings, made poor work of it at first, but their ambition was roused to take their turn, and no one ever failed to come to time. One of my brothers made a funny mistake, by being in too great haste to show his skill. He had but recently taken his place among the readers; the portion of Scripture was the story of the Marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the miracle of changing the water into wine. The verse that came to the boy was the one in which Jesus saith unto them, "Draw out now and bear," etc. Having some idea of the run of the story, he read with a loud, shrill voice, "Draw out *new* BEER." He did not hear the last of it for many a year.

We had a lad staying with us for a time, who took his seat to read in his turn, and we were reading in the Book of Proverbs. He called a "stalled ox" a "salted ox," and never was allowed to forget the blunder.

The various experiments made with his own, and the children of others, led my father to think it best for children not to be sent to school, or to be taught to read at home, until they were at least five years old. He would have preferred a later, rather than an earlier period, for the commencement of literary pursuits. And having tried the earlier on the first two, he adhered to the fifth year for beginning, in the case of the other five children. In this conclusion he was right and wise. Doubtless thousands of parents send their children to public schools at a very early age simply to get them out of the way for a few hours. The children have nothing to do but to sit on the benches, yawn in the

bad atmosphere, and contract a habit of idleness. It were better for them to be out of doors.

In three months from the time of my learning the letter A I was a very fair reader, and have been steadily at books ever since.



## V.

### MY SCHOOL-DAYS.

LATIN, GREEK, AND HEBREW.—SCHOOL EXAMINATION.—  
PREPARING FOR COLLEGE.—LEVI PARSONS.

I BEGAN to learn the Latin Grammar when I was eight years old. But I did not leave the district school. There was no Latin to be learned there, but my father set my older brother and myself at it out of school hours, and we recited to him in the early morning, or evening, as was most convenient. This was working double tides, and most boys would have complained; but we made light of it. At the age of ten I began the study of Greek, and in the same year learned the Hebrew letters, and made a little progress in the first chapter of Genesis.

In the very early spring of this my tenth year, I had a fit of sickness, with acute inflammation, which lasted several weeks; my life was despaired of. I remember the words and the looks of friends, as they came softly to the bed to look at me, supposing that I was very near dying. I recovered, but did not now know a Hebrew letter. I learned the language again when nineteen years old, had a fit of sickness, and on getting well had forgotten the letters.

At the age of ten years I was invited to visit a "madam's school" for very little boys and girls, twenty or thirty scholars. The lady teacher, Mrs. Waters,

asked me to come and examine her pupils, and see if they were doing well. I did not for a moment think of its being strange that a boy of my age should be called to such a service, and I went without hesitation. I spent two or three hours sitting on a platform, while the successive classes stood before me, went through their recitations, and answered the questions I propounded, if they could. Then the little girls brought their samplers — cloth on which they had worked letters or pictures — and laid them on my knees while I examined and criticised their work. The boys “spoke pieces.” I made encouraging remarks, expressed myself as greatly pleased with what I had seen and heard, and praised the lady teacher for her great skill in teaching the “young idea how to shoot.” When the time for closing the school had arrived, each girl came in front of me and made a courtesy, each boy stepped forth and made his bow, and retired.

All this sounds as if I must have been a little prig, and quite insufferable for airs; but it seemed at the time to be the most natural thing in the world, and I supposed that other children were in the habit of doing the same thing. If they were, I did not hear of them then, and have not since.

Two cousins from Albany, the motherless children of my mother's brother, came to live with us, to be educated and trained as members of our family. They were James B. and John P. Jermain. James joined the same class with my brother and me, and we studied Latin and Greek together. We read Cæsar's Commentaries, the first six books of Virgil's *Æneid*, Cicero *De Senectute* (of which I wrote a translation into English, before I went to college, and have the original manu-

script to this day), *De Amicitia*, and the Orations; and in Greek we studied *Græca Minora*, and the New Testament.

My father had for some time been one of the trustees of Middlebury College in Vermont, and when my cousin was to go to college my father went with him to Commencement, taking my brother and me along. We three had read the same amount of Latin and Greek, and were equally well prepared to enter. But my youth was regarded as an insuperable objection to my then going to college. My cousin was examined, and admitted without hesitation, and I could have passed then as well as he did. But I was not yet twelve years old, and returning home I pursued the studies of the Freshman class of college with my father, who took the charge of the academy in Cambridge.

In the year 1818, when I was six years old, we had a visitor at our house who made an indelible impression on parents and children. This was Levi Parsons, the first missionary with Pliny Fisk to go to Jerusalem. Mr. Parsons, a young preacher, was directed by the American Board of Foreign Missions to visit some of the churches before he sailed for his field in the East. I know not what impulse or invitation led to his journey into the remote and comparatively secluded region of country in which we dwelt. But he came, and was received in the name of the Lord. There was a special tenderness of interest in his reception and his visit, because he was already commissioned to the Holy Land. No mission from America had ever been sent to that country. We looked on this young man almost like one who was going to be one of the personal followers of Christ, and perhaps to be crucified with him,

or for him. Mr. Parsons spent a week at our house, and, with my father, called at the door of every family belonging to the congregation, and received whatever contribution they were disposed to give after having heard the subject fully presented by Mr. Parsons on the previous Sabbath. Our congregation raised three hundred dollars, and the church of which Dr. Alexander Bullions was pastor, in the same town, gave two hundred dollars. This gift of five hundred dollars, in a secluded, rural town, to the cause of Foreign Missions in the year 1818, was far more wonderful than the donation of five thousand dollars in that place would be now.

But the result of that visit was permanently felt by all of the children who were then old enough to appreciate the subject. He seemed to be specially interested in us, and proposed to read the Bible with us in course, the same chapter to be read by him and us every day, and he would write to us from time to time, and we to him, mentioning what chapter we were reading on the day of writing, and in this way we would be sure and keep together. He went to his distant field. Our first letter from him was dated at Malta; there were no steamers then, and he went in a sailing-vessel, which probably made no landing till it reached that island. Then we had a letter from him in Jerusalem. Then there was a long silence, and at last we heard that he was dead. It was a sad event, as if we had lost a near and dear friend. Finally a letter reached us that had been long delayed on its journey, and did not arrive until one year after he died.

He went from Jerusalem to Egypt in hope of being benefited in health by a change of climate. At Alex-

andria he died, and was buried in the little graveyard of the Coptic Convent. Many years afterwards, in 1854, when I was travelling there, I sought the grave of Parsons, at the special desire of my father. But it was undistinguished by any stone, and there was no one who could point to the spot where was the dust of my friend who was buried there thirty-five years before.

## VI.

### LIFE IN THE HOME.

MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES. — EMOTION AND VIRGIL. — MY MOTHER'S TEMPERAMENT. — DISOBEDIENCE AND DETECTION.

IT was not long after this visit of Mr. Parsons, which left us all deeply interested in missions, that a young minister by the name of Fayette Shepherd came to our house, and talked with us very seriously on the subject of religion. Indeed, his first question to me made it very natural for him to do so. He said: "What are you going to be when you are grown up to be a man?"

I answered without a moment's hesitation: "I mean to be a minister."

I have no recollection of the time when I did not have this distinct purpose, which was natural for a boy who saw his father in the pulpit every Sunday, and never doubted that his father was the greatest man in the world.

Mr. Shepherd set us all to learning the Psalm beginning, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and the lessons he left on our minds, at least on mine, were decidedly useful; but I confess I did not distinctly understand what was the meaning of the ointment running down upon Aaron's beard.

Our house became a resort for foreign missionaries, who now and then returned from their fields on account

of health. Cambridge was on the great road from New England to Saratoga Springs, and ministers made the minister's house their hotel without the slightest acquaintance beforehand.

I have frequently known a minister, a total stranger, to come to the door with horse and gig, and asking if the minister lived there, he would tell us, the boys, to take his horse, put him up, give him four quarts of oats at night and as many in the morning, and then march into the house to spend the night. With our present ideas of propriety, such *manners* seem impossible, but they were common in my young days.

Among the missionaries who are particularly memorable were Mrs. Graves and Mr. Bardwell, both of India; and the savor of their lovely piety is a precious memory.

Two children were named at the Seminary in India or Ceylon after my parents. We used to read the "Missionary Herald" to find their names. I think the boy did not turn out well, and was dropped. But we heard of the conversion of the girl, who bore my mother's full name. And on the Sabbath night after the news came of the hopeful piety of this girl, we were deeply moved by my father saying that heathen children might rise in judgment to condemn us, if they repented with the small advantages they enjoyed, while we continued in sin with the full light of the gospel.

Many schoolboys cry over their lessons because they are too hard, or because they are punished for not learning. But I was the only boy in the school of whom it could be said that the pathos of a Latin poet moved him to tears. When I was studying the "Æneid" of Virgil I was in the condition of his hero when he asked, "Quis talia fando temperet a lachrymis?" ("Who can refrain

from weeping when telling the tale of such woe?") And when I came to recite in the class, the tenderness of the passages that fell to me to translate and read was such as to render it impossible for me to go on. I doubt if any one except my father had any thought of what was the matter. But he had. He saw the same weakness in other relations, and has told me since that when I was a boy he did not believe I would ever be fit to do anything in the world; that a nature so sensitive would not endure the rough and tumble of every-day life.

My earliest recollections of my mother are of being called in from play out of doors to see her when she was thought to be dying. She was an invalid, and was supposed to have consumption. Her instructions which made the most lasting impressions on me were given in her bed when she was sick. She encouraged me to commit hymns to memory, and to repeat them to her as she was lying in bed.

With this exceeding delicacy of constitution, she was indefatigable in domestic and social duty, looking well to the household with a vigilance and fidelity not excelled by the good wife in the Book of Proverbs. She never spoke a cross or impatient word to one of her children, but she ruled with a loving power that no spirit could resist. To offend her was an offence never imagined in that home.

One Sunday morning she passed through the bedroom where I was sitting up in bed, just ready to rise for the day. She looked at me with a sad look of reproof, and said: —

“ My son, you went into the water yesterday.”

“ Yes, I did, Ma; and I am glad you have found it out, for I have felt very bad about it.”



We were forbidden to go in swimming without permission, and on the Saturday afternoon, which was a holiday, I had been off with several schoolboys who were going into the water for a swim, and they urged me to go in with them. This I refused to do, and gave as a reason that I was forbidden by my parents to go in without their consent.

To their assurance that it would never be found out I was quite indifferent, as it was not fear of my parents so much as the fear of God that restrained me. But persuasion finally overcame me when one of the boys said he knew a way to make us all keep the secret so that it would never be known, — we were all to form a ring, and lock our little fingers together, and then to promise never to tell; if any one did tell his little finger would rot off! We went through this form, and the promise being made, we stripped, and went into the water. I had no pleasure, — for I was very much afraid I should be drowned, — and was glad to be on dry land again. My little shirt being cut lower in front than behind, — a fact that I did not know at the time, — I put it on wrong side before, and the quick eye of a mother as she saw me in the morning detected the change that had been made in the course of the previous day.

I freely confessed the sin, and said my little finger might rot off, but I would tell what I had done, and the others could do as they pleased. That was sixty years ago, and both my little fingers are sound at the present time, so that I have no apprehensions of losing either of them.

## VII.

### EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

THE SLEIGH RIDE.—DIVERSITIES OF CHARACTER.—SENSITIVENESS.—FRIGHTENING CHILDREN.

MY last letter recorded the only instance of wilful disobedience of which I have any recollections. Of this I did sincerely repent; and as my parents forgave me, I had reason to believe God did, but I never forgave myself. To do what my parents had expressly forbidden me to do was in my own eyes a great wrong; and I determined never to do so again. The nearest that I ever came to it was when I was grown nearly to manhood, and I mention it here to show the wisdom of that parental system of government that prevailed in our home.

We were residing in Sing Sing, N. Y., in 1830-31. In the winter the sleighing was fine, and the young people had made up a party for a sleigh ride in the evening. Having met with an accident that partially disabled me for a few days, I was afraid if it were known that I was going off on this excursion, my father would prefer to have me avoid the exposure. I said nothing about it, and after tea slipped out unobserved (as I thought), and was off to the rendezvous. But a voice that I could never mistake called me back. I returned, and going into the library where my father was sitting, I said:—

“Did you call me, sir?”

“Yes,” he answered; “where were you going?”

I said: “A party of us young folks are going off for a sleigh ride this evening, and I was making haste to the place where we are to meet.”

“Have you money enough with you,” he asked, “to pay your share of the expense?”

“I have some,” said I; “but perhaps it would be safer to take more.”

He gave me a few dollars, with a caution not to go into company with young people without having money enough to do what was proper in paying expenses!

Would I ever think of deceiving such a man as that? He had perfect confidence in his children that they would do nothing wrong with money, and he wished them to enjoy whatever recreations were innocent and reasonable. My fear had simply been that he would, for the sake of my health, judge that I had better not go out in the cold evening to ride. I was willing to take the risk of that, and so, it turned out, was he.

More than forty years afterwards one of my own children, a boy in college, said to me: “I would like to have ten dollars, but I do not want you to ask me what I am going to do with it.” This was rather a startling way of asking for money. I thought of the matter a moment; I had perfect confidence in the principles of the lad. Perhaps now he had become involved in some difficulty that he was sorry for, but must pay for also; or he might have to pay expenses for some doubtful performances. At any rate I was sure that he would *do right* even at the sacrifice of the good opinion of his fellows. I gave him the money, and never knew what he did with it.

The peculiar sensibility of my nature in childhood is now made mention of only for the sake of caution to parents against trifling with such a nature, or rudely seeking to suppress it. The features of character in children are as diverse as their faces; all have the family likeness, but each has his own peculiar temperament. A wise parent watches, and seeks to guide, govern, restrain, or stimulate, as they severally need.

I was never in childhood or youth able to look upon the face of a dead person without being haunted by it for several nights afterwards. In the darkness the sight was vivid and fearful; and it was long after going to bed before I could fall asleep. Whether my eyes were shut or open, it made no difference; the corpse was before me, a cold and terrible reality.

One day I went into a doctor's office, and a closet door being opened, there was hanging in full view a human skeleton. I had never seen one before, but the pictures in books had made me acquainted with it. "Deep horror then my vitals froze." I fled from the office, ran all the way home, and hid away. I had no appetite for food the rest of the day, and had no sleep that night.

Some one sent to my mother as a present a beautiful piece of wax-work, the size and shape of a human hand; it was a perfect reproduction of a hand, to a wart on one of the fingers. When I first saw it I had not the least doubt of its being a man's hand. It made me sick. I could not eat, and I tried in vain to get to sleep at night; and when my mother came to know why I was so restless, I was ashamed to confess the weakness of being scared by a wax figure.

While in my Senior year at college, one evening as

midnight was near, and the college was still, I was reading in my room alone. I heard footsteps rapidly approaching in the hall, and then a loud knock at my door. Thinking some one wanted help, and had sent for me, I opened the door, and there stood a man with a frightful mask on his face. I gave a scream, and slamming the door, fell to the floor insensible. How long I lay I do not know; but the long and wretched night was spent in indescribable suffering. Reason had no power to dispel my fears, or to stop the loud and rapid palpitations of my heart.

A judicious parent will never punish a child by frightening it, or by threatening it with anything that appeals to its fears. A nurse, servant, or teacher who resorts to such discipline should be discharged at once, and that without the hope or possibility of being restored. The one unpardonable offence is frightening a child.

## VIII.

### MY FATHER'S CHURCH.

OLD CAMBRIDGE. — THE PINES. — THE OLD WHITE MEETING-HOUSE. — SQUARE PEWS. — SAMUEL IN THE PULPIT.

NOT long after coming to New York, I was requested to furnish a series of papers for a religious monthly magazine. The "Old White Meeting-house; or, Reminiscences of a Country Congregation" followed, and as the book into which they were gathered has long since been out of print and forgotten, I will repeat some of those memories here. They are sketches of rural church life, sixty years ago, all of which I saw, and part of which I was.

My heart turns often and fondly to that spot away up in the country, where my boyhood and youth were passed, where those dear to me are buried, where I first learned to read and to pray, where I thought to live and to die. It was in the old town of Cambridge, in the State of New York; and those who know not the geography of that part of the world must be told that the town is a wide, fertile plain, some ten or twelve miles across, circled with hills, watered by lovely and gentle streams, and peopled by a set of independent farmers, who are well to do for this world, and the most of them have been wise enough to make provision for the world to come.

It was in this town that I had my "bringing up." I could spend some time in describing "our house" and the things in and around it; and it might not be out of the way to do so, as the natural course to matters of more public interest. There was a stream close by the door that was my resort in the trout season, and there was a grove of pines but a short distance off, into which I often in childhood wandered alone; and long before I ever heard of Coleridge, or his "Hymn in the Vale of Chamouni" where he says,—

"Ye pine groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds," —

I had loved to sit down on the moss, and listen to the spirit-melody of the still air among the tree-tops, sighing to my soul, and saddening, I could not tell why, my young heart. There I used to think of communing with God and the spirits of the good in heaven; and in the solemn twilight of those deep shades, I had thoughts of loving and serving God, which are now working themselves out in life's struggles, and will never be fully answered till he who called me *then* shall call me to himself. Then there was the old schoolhouse and a hard set of boys; and I might spend an hour, or a week, in making chronicles of the first dozen of them that now leap up before the mind's eye, like young tigers, begging me to draw their portraits, and send them down the stream of time with these rough sketches. But the boys must wait. We have no room for them. Some of them will come in by the way, and we shall here and there set up a stone to the memory of some poor fellow, at whose fate we drop a passing tear. It is the religious life of the people that I want to bring out for

the entertainment and instruction of those who may read.

“THE OLD WHITE MEETING-HOUSE.”

So it was called, and by this name it was known all over the country. Not but that there were other white meeting-houses in that region, but this was by way of eminence *the* White Meeting-house, as the largest and oldest and most respectable; and when a political meeting or general training or a show was to be held at the tavern opposite, the notice was given that the gathering was to be at the White Meeting-house corners, and everybody for a dozen miles around knew at once where it was to be.

It was a large square building, with a steeple whose lofty spire gave me my first and strongest impressions of “amazing height;” and now as I look at “Trinity” here in Broadway, and the men dwindled into dwarfs on its all but “cloud-capt towers,” it does not look half as tall as that steeple, with a *fish* for a *weather-cock*, wheeling in the breeze. How often have I lain on “the green” in front of that church, and wondered how they ever got that fish away up there; or who hitched the lightning-rod to that spire, and how any one ever dared to shingle the roof of that awful steeple almost to the very summit! And sometimes in the night when I had “bad dreams,” I fancied that I was clasping that steeple in my little arms and sliding slowly down, the steeple widening, and my hold relaxing, till at length down I came, down, down; and just as I was to strike the ground I would wake in terror, and be afraid to go to sleep again, lest I should repeat that terrible slide.



The church had square pews, with high partitions and sash-work between, which were great inlets of amusement to the children, who were always thrusting their arms through, and sometimes their heads, in the midst of the sermon, but more particularly in prayer time, for then they were more likely to escape observation. These *square pews* the minister always was free to say he regarded as an invention of the Devil; and there was some reason to believe that the Devil had the right to a patent. As half of the congregation must sit with their backs to the preacher, it was customary for the parents to place the children in this position; and it is easy to see that thus situated it would be next to impossible to secure their attention to the services of the sanctuary. Of course the Devil would be pleased with an arrangement which so effectually prevents the young from becoming interested in divine truth, and I do not therefore wonder at the good minister's notice of the origin of the plan.

The pulpit was like unto an immense barrel supported on a single post. Its interior was gained by a lofty flight of steps, and the preacher once in possession had certainly a most commanding position. I can recollect often thinking how easy it would be with a saw to cut away the pillar on which this old pulpit tottered, and then what a tremendous crash it would make, coming down with the minister in it.

This reminds me of one of the minister's boys, an arch rogue, about five years old, who was so much in the habit of misbehaving in meeting that he had to be punished often and soundly, but with no sanative consequences. His father threatened frequently to take him into the pulpit with him if he did not behave better,

but the youngster never believed that he was serious in the threat, or if he was, the boy thought that there was as much chance for fun in the pulpit behind his father's back as there was in the pew before him. At length the pastor was as good as his word, and one Sunday morning, to the surprise of the people, he led his roguish boy up into the pulpit, and proceeded with the service. Samuel began to be uneasy, but remained comfortably quiet until the long prayer began; then he fidgeted up on the seat, and peeked over upon the congregation below. And finally, as a sudden thought struck him, he threw one leg over the pulpit, and there sat astride of the sacred desk, drumming with his little heels upon the boards. The good pastor at prayer could not turn aside to dismount his hopeful boy, but between his fears that the child would fall, and the indications of mirth among the young folks in the church, the minister had more than he could do to keep his thoughts on the service, and he therefore speedily brought his petitions to a close, and seized the youth in the midst of his ride. We never saw Samuel in the pulpit again, and a marked improvement in his manners gave us reason to believe that certain domestic appliances were resorted to, which have the recommendation of the wisest of men as useful in cases of this desperate nature.

## IX.

### IN THE GRAVEYARD.

SWALLOWS. — SUMMER SERVICES. — AMONG THE TOMBS. — THE  
SABBATH QUESTION. — COUNTRY FUNERALS. — CITY BURIALS.

THE old church was the haunt of swallows that built their nests under its eaves; and it was no unusual thing for one of these swift-winged birds to dart into the open window on a summer Sabbath, and by some strange perversity to persist in flying everywhere but out of the window again, till wearied with flying to and fro, it would light on the sounding-board over the minister's head. These gyrations were quite an amusement to the children; and I remember that on one of these occasions the same young Samuel who has already been introduced thought he had hit upon something smart when he turned up the eighty-fourth Psalm in Watts: —

“ And wandering swallows long  
To find their wonted rest.”

But that pulpit or that house was no place for mirth. Never in all the wanderings of after-life, in splendid temples, where the wealth of princes has been lavished to make honorable the house of God, where the stained windows shed dim religious light over the solemn courts, and the great organ poured its deep thunders on the ear, never there or elsewhere have I seen or heard so much of God as in that old white meeting-house. It

was a *plain* house, it is true. Except the pulpit and the front of the gallery, the whole interior was innocent of paint, and the bare floor rang under the heavy tread of the substantial farmers as they came up the narrow aisles with their horse-whips in their hands. And they were a plain people in that church; some of them in hot weather sat with their coats off, and some stood up in sermon-time when they became drowsy by sitting. It was all the plainness of a country congregation in a country meeting-house; but *God was there*. I heard him in his preached Word, when the strong truths of the gospel were poured with energy from that sacred desk, not in enticing words of man's wisdom, but with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. I felt him when the Holy Ghost came down on the congregation as on the day of Pentecost, and strong men bowed themselves under the mighty influence of subduing grace.

In the rear of the meeting-house was the graveyard, and all my early recollections of death and the grave are associated with that quiet and solemn spot. It was a large enclosure which had never been laid off in "lots to suit purchasers;" but a decent interval was left between families, and all came there on common ground. A few pines of a large growth were scattered in it, and with the exception of here and there a rose-bush, the place was unadorned. But it had attractions. For every Sabbath day during the interval of divine worship, the people from a distance, who remained at church "bringing their dinner" with them, were in the habit of walking among the tombs, meditating upon themes suggested by the inscriptions they read upon the head-stones, and speaking to one another of the virtues of those whom

when living they had known and loved. And often of a summer Sabbath evening, the young people would stroll into the yard, the gate of which was always left open on the Sabbath, and at such time there was never heard the slightest indication of levity or irreverence for the holy day.

But observance of the Sabbath was a strongly marked feature of that place and people. A simple fact will show the state of public opinion on this subject. On one occasion several young men, chiefly from some mechanical establishments lately set up in the neighborhood, not having the fear of God or the laws of man before their eyes, made up a party and went off to the mountains to pick whortleberries. The minister and a few of the good men held a consultation, and it was determined to put the statute of the State into execution and make an example of them, to prevent the pernicious influences which might result to the whole community if such a flagrant breach of morals were suffered to go unpunished. Accordingly the whole party were arrested, brought before 'Squire King, and fined one dollar each. There was no help for them, and they paid the fine; but they watched the opportunity for revenge. And it soon came, in a small way; for on the next Sabbath afternoon they saw the 'Squire's daughter, a fine girl of seventeen, in the garden picking a few currants, and they complained of her to her own father, had her arrested, and the fact being too clearly established by proof to admit of any evasion, the 'Squire was compelled to impose the fine and pay it himself! This was quite a triumph for these low fellows, who, however, were very careful not to go after whortleberries on the Sabbath again. But this is wandering out of the old graveyard.

There was a simple beauty and solemnity in those country funerals that I have not observed for years. A death in the country is a widely different event in its relations and effects from one in the city. The other day I observed an unusual gathering at the house of my next-door neighbor, a man whom I had never known even by sight. Presently a hearse stood in front of the house, and I soon learned that it had come to take away the body of my neighbor to his burial. It was sad to think of, that I could have been living with only a thin wall between me and a brother man who had been for weeks struggling with disease, and who had finally sunk into the arms of death, while I had never even *felt* the tenderness of sympathy with him or his in the days and nights of suffering and sorrow which they had known. Yet so it is in this city. Your nearest neighbors are utter strangers, and may sicken and die and be buried, and you will know nothing of it unless you happen to be at home when the hearse comes or goes.

It is not so in the country. There in Cambridge, when one was sick all the neighbors knew it and felt it; kindness, like balm, fell on the heart of the sufferer from every family near, and when death came solemnity was on every heart. All the country-side, from far and near, without being *invited*, came to the funeral and filled the house and the door-yard, and when the services were concluded, the coffin was brought out in front of the house, and the multitude were permitted to take a farewell look at the departed. Then the remains were borne away to the grave, followed by a long train, not of hired carriages, but of plain wagons filled with sympathizing friends; and the procession moved on slowly and silently, often many miles, to the place of burial.

As it reached the yard those who lived near would drop in, and join the crowd that was now gathering at the open grave; and the children of the neighborhood, especially, were sure to be present at such times. Frequently have I been deeply moved by the scenes around those graves, — for there in the country, nature revealed itself in its simple power, — and the deep, but half-stifled groan that has come to my soul when the first clods fell on the coffin was as if they fell on the warm breast of a sleeping friend. We see no such funerals here in this great city, — itself a mighty charnel-house. We take our dead to the narrow cemetery, and for thirty pieces of silver purchase the privilege of putting the precious dust into a great cellar. Some time ago a friend of mine wanted to remove the ashes of his wife from one of these receptacles, and he applied to the keeper for that purpose; the man objected on account of the time that would be consumed in the undertaking. My friend offered to defray all the expenses, and reward him liberally besides, but it was of no avail; and he was finally told that it would be impossible ever to find or recover the remains. These are city burials. Rural cemeteries are now more *fashionable* in the neighborhood of cities. Let them be encouraged. Dust we are, and when we die let us go back to our mother's bosom, and rest there till mortal puts on immortality.

## X.

### OUR MINISTER.

THE VIOLATED GRAVE.—NATHANIEL SCUDDER PRIME.—HIS  
MIGHTY VOICE.—AN IRREVERENT HEARER.

MY recollections of the old graveyard at Cambridge remind me of the great excitement which once pervaded the community when it was reported that a grave had been violated in that peaceful yard, and the lifeless tenant carried off by the doctors. The appearance of the grave led to suspicion that there had been foul play. It was examined, and the suspicions were found to be too true. The body of a girl some fourteen years of age, of respectable family, had been stolen from the sepulchre to be cut up and made into a "natomy," as the people expressed it. The whole town was aghast. Such an outrage had never been heard of in that part of the world, and the good people could scarcely believe that such monsters lived as men who dig up corpses to hack them in pieces. They met in righteous indignation, and appointed a committee of investigation, who never rested till they got upon the trail of the hyenas; they never rested till the perpetrator of the deed was in prison, and the instigator—Dr. —, who escaped by some flaw in the indictment—was compelled to remove from the town.

These events naturally led to great apprehensions respecting other graves, and many were searched by



anxious friends, who now watched the tombs with more vigilance than did the guards set over the holy sepulchre. The impression became very strong that a certain grave had been robbed. It was the grave of a lovely woman, the wife of a drunkard; and the fact that he was dead to all feeling, and consequently would not be likely to care what became of the body of his wife, seemed to confirm the grounds of suspicion, and finally it was determined to make the examination. It was the afternoon of a warm day in the midst of summer, when I, a mere child then, was attracted into the yard by seeing a number of men around a grave. I soon learned what was going on, and creeping between the feet of those who were standing nearest, I was soon immediately over the head of the grave which they had now opened down to the coffin. Having cleared off the earth, and started the fastenings of the lid, which were all found secure, they raised it, and the full light of the sun flowed upon the most horrid spectacle which my eyes before or since have seen, — “corruption, earth, and worms” were there.

I waited not for a second look, but ran from the spot in awful terror, and have, from that time, had an image of “death’s doings” which I never could have obtained but for the loathsome revelations of that graveyard scene.

These are not the things that I intended to record of that hallowed spot. Yet they are, perhaps, among the most vivid impressions that I retain of it, — unless it be my fears to pass it alone after dark! And I should as soon have thought of setting fire to the church as of *playing* within the enclosure. I looked upon it with reverential awe as “God’s acre;” and I wish with all

my heart that the feeling of regard for sacred places, and times, and things, which we felt in our childhood might return.

Our minister was my father, the Rev. Nathaniel Scudder Prime. He had no one singularity of which I can now think; and if the reader jumps to the conclusion that he was therefore a moderate, every-day sort of man, not worth knowing about, he must even skip the description, and go on to something more to his taste.

That I have *looked up* to him with such a reverential awe as the present degenerate age knows very little of is very likely; and it may be that if he had lived in this day, when all ministers are so good, or all children so much more advanced than they were sixty years ago, perhaps he would not stand out before the world with so bold a prominence as he did in my eyes. When he walked slowly but modestly up the aisle, and climbed the lofty pulpit, I thought he was the holiest man in the world; he seemed *awfully holy!* I have never had the least reason to suppose that I was mistaken in those notions about him, yet much allowance may doubtless be made for a child's reverence for his father, in days now gone, to come back never, I sadly fear.

He was thirty-five or forty years of age when I was five or six, and consequently he was *always* an old man in my eyes; and I have no other recollections of him than those associated with the deepest reverence. That he ever *sinned*, I never supposed; and if any one had mentioned anything to his disadvantage in my hearing, it would have shocked me very much, as it would now to hear of a peccadillo in an angel. This is no place, and I have no time, to go into the reasons

of the change in the sentiment of children respecting their minister, but from the bottom of my heart I wish that the good old times of Edwards would come back again, or if that is wishing too much, the times when I was a boy! Those were good times compared with these, though I have no hope to convince the young of it.

He had an extraordinary voice. Perhaps this ought to be written down as a singularity. It rings this moment in my ears just as it did sixty years ago, and not with the most pleasant music, for it was harsh and strong, and when he was roused by the great theme of pulpit discourse, the gospel would come down in such torrents of overwhelming sound that it sometimes seemed to me the people must be carried by storm. Yet was he far from being a *violent* preacher. He had too much of the milk of human kindness in his soul to say hard things in a hard way, but the power of which I speak was the voice of a mighty man, on the mightiest theme that ever employed the lips of man, and how could he be otherwise than overpowering? At times his voice was terrible! That is to say, when he suddenly raised it in a tone of command, he would start every dull soul in that assembly as if a thunderbolt had hit the old white meeting-house in the middle of the sermon.

One Sabbath, when the congregation was unusually silent and solemn, a half-crazy man, but more mischievous than mad, rose in the gallery, and commenced making various gesticulations to amuse the young people, who sat in that part of the house. The congregation below did not know that anything was going on, but the minister saw it in a moment; and to try gentle

means at first, he made a sign to the man to sit down and be still. Wilson kept his fun in operation till the forbearance of Mr. Prime was quite spent, and looking sternly at him, he thundered out, "*Mr. Wilson, sit down, sir!*" The man fell back in his seat as though a bludgeon had smote him, and never raised his head during the service. He called the next day on Mr. Prime and made an apology, and sealed it by sending him a load of wood.

But it was the effect of his voice upon the congregation of which I was speaking. If the roof had fallen in, the people would scarcely have been more startled than by this pastoral explosion. Every heart trembled, and it was some time before the children could get their breath. Yet there was no sign of impatience or any other unholy passion, in the sudden blow of his voice, by which the minister had laid low his disorderly auditor; but there was majesty and power in those tremendous tones, which carried conviction to every conscience that Mr. Prime was not a man to be trifled with, and that, standing in God's name and house, he would teach every man to keep in his place.

## XI.

### PREACHER AND PASTOR.

A TRUE SHEPHERD.—“SAYING THE CATECHISM.”—PREACHING THE DOCTRINES.

HAVING spoken of my father's remarkable vocal power, it is *in order* to speak of the *authority* which he wielded in that congregation. It was the *beauty of power*. It was right that he should rule in the church, according to the laws of the church, and the Word of God; but his rule was that of love,—so kindly, yet firmly dispensed that no man thought of quarrelling with it who did not also war against divine authority. The pastor *was* the pastor. As shepherd of the flock, it was his office to watch over them and keep them, as far as in him lay, from wandering into dangerous ways, and from the covert or open assaults of enemies, who go about like their master, the Devil, seeking whom they may devour. And when any one or any dozen of the *sheep* took it into their heads that they knew more about the proper mode of managing the flock than the *shepherd* whom the Lord had sent to tend them, they soon found that they had mistaken their calling, and would consult their happiness and usefulness by quietly minding their own business. Now, you would not do Mr. Prime exact justice if the inference should be drawn from this fact that he was regardless of the wishes of his people, or kept them at a distance when they wished to take counsel with

him on the interests of the church. Far otherwise were his temper and practice. They were taught, and they learned, to come with all freedom and lay their hearts before him; and the patience and sympathy with which he listened to their individual, and all but endless stories is a matter of wonder to me, now that I call to mind how much of it he was compelled to endure. While he was ready always to enter with kindness and freedom into the varied wants of those who came to him with "something on their minds," he knew his own duties too well, and his high responsibility to God, to suffer them for a moment to dictate to him as to the mode in which he should manage the flock of which he had been made the overseer. Even in those days, the people would sometimes have "itching ears" to hear a new-light preacher of great renown, who was turning the world upside down with his eloquence, and they would take some roundabout way to hint to their pastor that it would be a good plan to send for him to come and give them a few rousing sermons. But they were not long in finding that he held the keys of the pulpit in his own hand, and asked whom he pleased, and none others, to feed his flock. If this uniform course of conduct now and then chafed the necks of some of the less judicious of the congregation, the pastor had two rich and all-sufficient sources of comfort,—the support of all the better sort of his people, and the approbation of a good conscience.

His intercourse with his people did not confine itself to their visits at his study or house. He sought them at their own homes, and around their firesides and tables he mingled with them in such easy and cheerful conversation that they felt him to be their friend, while

they never forgot that he was their teacher and guide to heaven. The children never felt altogether at home when the minister was there. They were not quite so free to come into the room, and they hung down their heads, and perhaps kept one thumb in their mouths, as if they were very much ashamed of themselves when summoned into his presence "to say the catechism," and receive such good and wholesome advice as he never failed to administer, in tones that sunk deep into their young hearts. Those were often very solemn seasons, and if the practice is passing away from the churches of our land, I would that it might be restored again.

In these good days of Sunday-schools, and other excellent but modern modes of training up children in the way in which they should go, the old-fashioned plan of pastoral-catechising has been laid aside in very many parts of our land. I speak not of the catechism of any particular creed. All those who call themselves *Christian* have a duty to perform to their children, and if the pastor and parents would imitate the example of Mr. Prime, they would bless their children and the country. In these pastoral visits, and in the instruction which the young received in preparation for it, were laid the principles of that attachment to the doctrines of the gospel, of the order of the church, and of submission to the law of God and of man, obedience to parents, respect to those who are older, wiser, and better, that ever marked the youth who were trained under the ministry of this man of God; and I am inclined to think that if you follow the whole generation that passed their childhood in that congregation at that time, you will find very few who have not become, and remained till death, sober, quiet, substantial citizens, and useful, honest men,

In speaking of Mr. Prime's voice, I touched incidentally upon his power as a preacher. He was eminently an instructive preacher. It was his aim to produce an intelligent conviction in the minds of his hearers of the truth of the great doctrines of the gospel, to elucidate them with so much distinctness that they should readily admit their force, and thus he would lay the foundation for those overwhelming appeals to duty that so marked his pulpit ministrations. *He was great on the doctrines.* I make this remark in this blunt way that the fact may stand out the more distinctly. He thought the religious system of the Bible was a system of great truths, having an intimate relation to one another, and an inseparable connection with the character, and consequently the destiny of men. Instead, therefore, of spending his time and strength in exhibiting himself, or in amusing his people with theories and speculations of his own; instead of merely practical exhortations which constitute so great a part of the preaching of many excellent and devoted men, he labored to bring home to the minds and the hearts of his people those cardinal doctrines of the gospel which lie at the root of all true faith and holy living, and by a course of regular and lucid expositions of the sacred oracles, he led them to behold these doctrines shining with lustre and majestic beauty on every page of revelation. And when these strong truths were thus unfolded, he would stand upon them as on a mount of glory, and thence urge the claims of God and the gospel with words of fervid heat and strength, that melted the hearts on which they fell, and mingled their saving power in the mass thus dissolved in the breasts of the assembly.



## XII.

### PASTORAL WORK.

“FIXING UP.”—PROFITABLE INTERVIEWS.—FAITHFUL ADMONITIONS.—HOUSEHOLD GATHERINGS.—A GODLY COMMUNITY.

AS soon as my father arrived at any house in his scattered and extended parish, all the ordinary cares of the family were suspended, and the whole time of every member given to him. On his first induction to this people, it was the custom of the good woman of the house to begin to fly about when the minister came, to fix up the best parlor, and get ready some warm biscuit for tea, or a pair of chickens for dinner, if he came before noon, and thus all her time was spent, like that of Martha, in much serving. Mr. Prime soon put an end to that mode of entertainment by informing his people from the pulpit that when he came to see them at their houses it was not to be feasted, but to feed their souls and the souls of their children; and therefore, if they wished to please him, they would do as Mary did, sit still and listen. This hint, after sundry repetitions, had the desired effect, and he was able to enjoy the whole time of his visit in those great duties which he felt to be of unspeakable importance to the spiritual welfare of the family. The heads of the household were first conversed with freely on the progress which they were making in personal religion; if they had doubts and fears,

or any other difficulties about which they needed direction, they were encouraged to make them known, and from the stores of his well-furnished mind and the richer treasures of a deeply spiritual experience, and great familiarity with the Word of God, he was able to impart just that counsel which their trials seemed to require. If they were backward in their performance of any of the acknowledged duties of Christian life, if the worship of God in the family was not faithfully attended to, if they were at variance with any of their neighbors, or slack in the discharge of their obligations to their fellowmen, he would in all kindness, but with skilful decision, as their soul's physician, give them those prescriptions without which it was impossible for their souls to thrive. Such fidelity and freedom on his part, so far from alienating their affections, did but endear him to them the more, as they saw his affectionate interest in their souls' concerns, and felt the power and truth of the admonitions which he gave. And then these admonitions were often blessed of God to the great comfort and edification of the people, who thus found in their own happy experience the ineffable value of a faithful pastor, whom they loved even when he came to wound.

The children were called in, and were examined, as I have hinted, in the catechism, in which they were regularly instructed by their parents. The doctrines therein contained were familiarly explained, and the young were most earnestly persuaded to give their hearts to the Saviour while yet in the morning of their days. As the congregation was widely extended, Mr. Prime would give notice on the Sabbath, that during the week on a certain day he would visit in such a neighborhood, and at three o'clock in the afternoon he wished the families in

that vicinity to assemble at a house named for religious conversation and prayer. And those were good meetings, you may be sure; the farmer's house in which it was held would be filled with parents and children, the halls and the staircase crowded; a little stand, with a Bible and psalm-book, would be set for the minister at some point from which his voice could easily be heard over all the house; and such prayers and such appeals would be then and there made as the Spirit of God delights to attend and bless. How many tears did the children shed in those meetings; not alarmed by terrible words of coming wrath, but melted with the pathos of gospel love, and moved by the strong appeals of that holy man. Impressions, I know, were made at those meetings that eternity will only brighten and deepen, as the memory of those solemn yet happy hours mingles with the joy of immortal bliss.

The effects of this ministry were, as might be expected, immediate and permanent. The Word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. The young grew up to manhood with strong attachments to the faith of their fathers, the members of the church were steadfast in their adherence to the truth as they had received it, and it was rare to see a man in the community who was not a professor of religion. The institutions of the gospel commanded the respect and reverence of the whole people. *Impiety* was scarcely known in the town, so deep-settled and widespread was this regard for the truths of God's Word and the ordinances of his house.

Here I was on the point of speaking of the great revivals of religion which followed such a ministry, but they will demand more space than I have now left. In future these may come before us with some of that ten-

der interest that now clusters in the region of my heart, as memory runs back to scenes when the Holy Spirit displayed his omnipotent grace, subduing sinners and winning them to the feet of Jesus. Precious revivals! come back and dwell with the church forever!

### XIII.

#### PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

MORAL COURAGE. — HOME REVISITED. — INDEPENDENT MEN.  
— HOLY LIVING.

I HAVE not half drawn my father's portrait, nor told one of a thousand incidents that ought to be thrown in to convey even a faint idea of the man to those who know nothing of him except what they gather from these sketches. If there were any traits of his symmetrical character that ought to be brought out in bolder relief on this page than the rest they were his *fixedness of purpose in right*, and his unterrified *moral courage*. These features blend in fine proportions in the life of every right man, but they are worthy of distinct recognition. It was his great study to learn what God would have him to do ; in one word, what was *right* ; for as he was always doing something, he merely wished to ascertain what was right, and he went on to achieve it as easily and naturally as he would eat to appease his hunger or rest when he was weary. It was no objection to any line of policy or the attempt of any enterprise that the people would not like it, or that the world would oppose it, nor even that it would probably fail for the want of support ; enough for him that it was a duty to which he was called, and like Luther on the way to Worms, or his Master on the way to crucifixion, he marched steadily onward, and if he did not succeed he nevertheless had his reward. Let a new sect seek

to propagate some pestilent heresy within the bounds of his parish; let a reformer, with zeal and without knowledge come and attempt to sow the seeds of revolution among the people; and then see with what calm and holy boldness he would rouse to the defence of the truth, and how error, affrighted, would flee away before his stern and manly rebukes. Let vice, under some insidious garb, begin to gain a foothold in the congregation, among the young in their follies, or the old in their pursuits of gain, and the "Old White Meeting-house" was sure to ring with righteous denunciations and the threatened judgment of an alienated God before the people knew that the mischief had reached the pastor's ear.

Come from your graves, old men and women of my native parish; come stand up before me while I draw your portraits and write your history! But they come not. Of all that were the men and women grown when I was a boy, how few of them are there now! A few years ago I broke away from the city and made a flying visit to the old town. I reached there on Saturday. No one knew me. A friend — yes, one whom I had grown up with from childhood, and knew me as well as an own brother — nodded to me as I passed, as they do to all strangers in the country; but the smile of recognition was wanting, and I felt truly a stranger in a strange land. I stopped and claimed his acquaintance without mentioning my name, and he looked steadily at me, but declared he had never seen me before. Alas! what work time makes with us. I look in the glass, but can see *no* change; and why should others find it out? We are hastening to the great and last change.

On Sunday I went to church in the new meeting-

house on the site of the old one, and what a change was here! The square pews had yielded place to the modern cushioned slips, the high pulpit, overhung with a threatening sounding-board, which I was always afraid would one day fall and crush my father when he preached so loud as to make it and me shake, had been supplanted by a railed platform and desk. But these were nothing to the change in the faces of the people. Those old familiar faces, — where were they? I looked here, and I looked there and everywhere, but I found them not, and shall not find them till the "old marble" of the graveyard breaks at the sound of the last trump, and the tomb resigns its trust. Holy men; the salt of the earth; men of faith and prayer; men of God! Some of you were like Enoch, and no wonder that God took you; one was like Elijah, and went after him; and many of you were men of whom the world was not worthy, and so earth lost you that heaven might gain you! Peace to your ashes! Oh, that each of you had left a son in your own image to perpetuate your name and your virtues! Good men were always scarce, and will be scarcer now that you are gone.

They were farmers mostly. They wrought with their own hands in the fields and the thrashing-floor, and were INDEPENDENT men, if there ever were independent men on the face of the earth. There was no river, or canal, or railroad, by which their produce could be transported to market, and by which the vices of the city could be transported to them; and thus were they saved from many of the sources of corruption that blight the villages which the march of improvement has reached. Often we see a secluded hamlet where purity and peace nestle as in their native heaven, till the rage

of the times drives an iron pathway right through its heart, a great tavern rises by its side, fashion, folly, and vice come along in the cars and stop, and then farewell to the quietness and virtue of that rural abode. Not so was it with our town. When the harvest was gathered and thrashed, the farmers loaded up their wagons with the great bags, and drove off thirty or forty miles to market, and returned with some of the comforts and a few of the luxuries of life, — the rest of their wants being readily supplied from the farm and the country store. Thus were their days spent in the peaceful pursuit of the most honorable and worthy calling to which man was appointed. Fewer temptations and more pleasures cluster around the path and home of the farmer than of any other man. He is not free from the reach of sin or sorrow, it is very true, and who is? Adam was a farmer, and the forbidden tree stood in the middle of his garden, and sin entered and made his paradise a prison. But of all earthly callings there is none in which there is so much to lead the soul to God, to take it away from the vanities of the world, to train the mind for communion with heaven, and prepare it for unbroken intercourse with heavenly and divine things, as in that of the farmer, who, with his own hands tills the field, breaks up the fallow ground, sows the seed, prays and waits for the early and latter rain, watches the springing of the grain, rejoices in the ripening ear, gathers the sheaves in his bosom, and with thankful heart fills his storehouse and barn and sits down content with the competent portion of good things which have fallen to his lot.



## XIV.

### EARLY TEMPERANCE REFORM.

RUM AND HARVESTING. — DRUNKARDS THEN AND NOW. —  
THE FAITHFUL ELDER. — LAUGHING IN CHURCH.

LET us come back to our farmers. They were men of principle and prayer. I will give an instance of the power of principle among them. Long, long before the era of the present temperance reform, the minister awoke to the evils resulting from the use of ardent spirits, even in an agricultural district like that in which he lived. The farmers in those days were wont to purchase their rum by the barrel, and to drink it freely, not only without any apprehensions of its ever doing them any harm, but in the firm persuasion that they could not do without it, and that it was one of the blessings of Providence, of which they should make a free use with thankfulness. But Mr. Prime, with a long-sightedness for which he was remarkable, foresaw the mischief the practice was begetting, and determined to lift up a standard against it. Accordingly, the "Old White Meeting-house" thundered with an anti-drinking blast, in which the evils of the practice, in all their moral, physical, and social bearings were set forth in words that fell like burning coals on the heart, and electrified the congregation. The good people wondered and meditated. There must be something in it, or he would not have brought it home to them with

such pungency and power. They thought of it with earnestness. Mr. Prime visited some of the largest farmers, and proposed to them to try the experiment of "haying and harvesting" one season without rum. It was such a strange idea that almost every one said it would be impossible to find men to do the work, and the crops would rot in the field; but two or three of the best of them were induced to try it. The result was most happy. They gave the hired men the usual cost of the rum as an advance upon their wages; they were perfectly satisfied. The work was done in better time and in better style, and the experiment was pronounced on all hands successful beyond controversy. The result was proclaimed through the town. The next year it was tried by several others, and soon it became a general practice among the farmers of that congregation, although the date of the temperance reformation is some years this side of that movement, which was as decided and important as any one instance of reform which has ever since been made. Indeed, I have now a sermon which Mr. Prime preached against the use of *intoxicating drinks* from the text "Who hath woe," etc., and which was delivered and printed in 1811, *before I was born*, yet I can *remember* the opening of the modern temperance reformation.

But there was very little intemperance even prior to this period. There were a few drunkards whose portraits I would add to these sketches, but that they are very much like unto modern drunkards, and their portraits are not very pleasant pictures. There was not, however, *one* in that whole town so given to the use of rum as a man whose house I passed yesterday, and who is now on his *thirteenth hogshcad of rum*; he is

seventy years of age, he buys his rum by the barrel and drinks steadily, year in and year out, and hopes to live to exhaust some hogsheads more. The generation of such men, we trust in God, is rapidly drawing to a close, and that they may leave no successors to tread in their footsteps, we will never cease to pray.

The firmness of principle which marked some of these men seems *now* incredible, when I observe the general degeneracy of the times on which we have fallen. You might as soon turn the sun from its course as to seduce from the path of virtue the Roman Fabrius, or Elder Joseph Stewart, of our congregation. In business he was true to the right, as the needle to the pole; and when questions of doubtful propriety were dividing the opinions of men, when you had found where truth and righteousness meet, there was Joseph, as calm but firm as a rock, or the angel Abdiel, "faithful among the faithless."

He *would* do his duty, come what might. Here he had learned much of the minister, but more of his Bible. When the enemy came in like a flood, or in the still, small current of seductive vice, Joseph Stewart was at his pastor's side, true as steel, holding up his hands like Aaron or Hur, and there he would have stood in the face of all the Amalekites of the universe. Such elders are rare now. One Sunday there was a family in church from the far city of New York. They had come up there to visit some country relations, and two or three of these gay city girls burst out laughing in the midst of the sermon. The cause was this. The old aunt whom they had come to visit had stopped in at one of the neighbors on the way to church, and had borrowed some little yellow cakes called *turnpikes*, and

used, I believe, for some purpose or other in baking bread. She had thrust them into her work-bag, which she carried on her arm, and during the sermon, having occasion to use her handkerchief, she drew it forth suddenly, and out flew the *turnpikes*, rolling and scampering over the floor. The city girls tittered at this, as if it were very funny. Their seat was on the side of the pulpit so that the pastor did not see them, or he would have brought them to order by a look, or a blow on the desk, which would have sent the blood out of their cheeks though their cheeks would have been *red* after that. But Joseph Stewart saw them, and rising in his seat struck with his psalm-book on the top of the pew; the preacher paused; the congregation sat dumb; the good elder spoke calmly but with energy: "*Those young women will stop that laughing in the house of God.*" They did stop; the pastor proceeded; Joseph sat down and the city girls gave no occasion for the exercise of summary church discipline during the remainder of their summer visit. The old aunt was at first disposed to resent the rebuke as an insult, and did complain to Mr. Prime, but she soon saw that the offence deserved the punishment, and she submitted.

## ELDERS AND PEOPLE.

AN EXCITING INCIDENT. — KIRTLAND WARNER. — ABRAHAM  
VAN TUYL. — OLD JACK.

I AM a little fearful that you will think that *incidents* were so common that they were characteristic of our Sabbath services. Not so. They were “few and far between,” — years rolling away, unbroken by a single circumstance to disturb the profound solemnity, the almost monotony of sacred worship in those venerable walls; the people always the same, the services always the same, the preaching, the singing *almost* always the same in style; there was little variety; and consequently, these incidents occurring in the lapse of years have made the deeper impression on my mind. Thus another comes, and I must tell it, whether or not in its proper place in the chronicles of this country congregation.

There was among the people always at church an old man by the name of “Rising.” He was not a pious man, and withal was very hard of hearing, so that having neither interest in the truth, nor the power to hear it with ease, he went to meeting from force of habit, took his seat with his back to the minister, and quietly sinking into slumber, slept steadily to the close of service. This was his constant practice. There was also a woman, Mrs. Burtis, whose mind was slightly sprung,

and whose nervous temperament was specially excitable by scenes of suffering, whether real or imaginary, meeting her eye or her ear. Thus the sight of a fellow-being in circumstances of sudden and dreadful distress would throw the old lady into fits, when she would scream so terrifically that it would have been nothing strange if all around her had gone into fits to keep her company. She sat in the same pew with old Mr. Rising, and directly in front of him, looking up to the minister. Mr. Prime was describing the destruction of Jerusalem as a wonderful example of the fulfilment of prophecy. He came to speak of the awful fact that delicate women took their own children and killed them, and cooked them, and ate them, so fearful was the power of ghastly famine over all the strongest and holiest impulses even of the mother's heart. He had wrought up the description with great skill and effect, and being excited with the theme, he portrayed with great pathos and power the scene where the Roman soldiers burst into a house, attracted by the smell of meat, and demanded it of the hands of the trembling woman within. She goes to the closet and brings forth upon a dish the fragments of her half-eaten child, and places it before the horror-stricken soldiers. Mrs. Burtis had been listening with riveted ears to the dreadful tale; the fire in her brain had been gathering fierceness as the preacher proceeded, but when the dish with the baked babe came out of the closet, she could stand it no longer; reason let go the reins, and springing from her seat, Mrs. Burtis pounced upon old Mr. Rising, who was sleeping in front of her, and with both hands seizing his gray locks, she screamed at the very top of her shrill voice: "*Where's the woman that killed my*

*child?*" The old man waked in amazement, but so utterly confounded that although his hair did not stand on end, for the very good reason that Mrs. Burtis held it down with her eagle talons, yet his "voice clung to his jaws." Not a word did he utter, but with meekness worthy of the martyrs, he held his peace until Joseph Stewart and Abraham Van Tuyl rose, and disentangling her fingers from the hair, conducted her quietly from the house, and the preacher went on with his narrative.

I have mentioned the traits of one elder. There was another, Kirtland Warner, a man of faith and prayer, whose life was the best of sermons, and who, being dead, yet speaks in the power of his memory, which is cherished with reverence among his posterity. He was not endowed with more than ordinary powers of mind, but he read his Bible much, and prayed much, and conversed much with his minister, and listened with devout attention to the instructions of the sanctuary, so that he was indeed an intelligent Christian, able to teach by word, as well as by the power of a godly life. If, as sometimes was the case, Mr. Prime was prevented from being with his people on the Sabbath, it was customary to read a sermon to the people. This was usually done by a worthy lawyer, and then Elder Warner was called on to pray; and such was the respect which the sincere and humble piety of that good man commanded that I venture to say the prayers of the minister were never more acceptable to the people, or more efficacious in the ear of Heaven.

The greatest funeral which was ever known in that town was at the burial of another of the elders, named after the father of the faithful, and worthy to bear the

name. He was the friend of God; a pillar in the church, and worth a score of the half-dead and half-live sort of Christians which abound in our congregations, — dead weights, some of them, and others curses. At Abraham Van Tuyl's funeral there were miles of wagons, filled with people from all parts of the surrounding country, who had come to testify their respect for one of the best of men. He was gathered to his fathers, but he left a son bearing his name who was chosen to bear also his office, and whose wisdom and piety fitted him to sustain the high trust he received with his ascending father's mantle.

These were leaders in the church. There was as great a variety of character as is usual in a country congregation; but I want to tell of "Old Jack," a blind negro, once a slave, now free, and the Lord's freeman, one of the most remarkable examples of the power of divine grace that the world can show. He was small in stature, old, hump-backed, blind, and black. After such a description, true to the letter, it will hardly be credited that he was a useful member of the church, qualified to lead in prayer and to make a word of exhortation to the edification of others, and that his gifts were often called into exercise in the social meeting. His piety was deep and fervent, and his faculties so shrewd and strong that his remarks were always pointed and pertinent, and often displayed an intimate knowledge of the human heart, and such close conversation with God as few of the most intelligent Christians enjoy.



## XVI.

### OUR CHOIR.

THE VILLAGE GOSSIP.—THE RED TAVERN.—DEACON  
SMALL.—THE REBELLION.

I WISH that you could see old Mrs. Sniffle, the gossip of the congregation, in her rounds of absorption, fastening herself upon every one, to take in, like a sponge, whatever they would impart, that she might have the sweet satisfaction of leaking it to others. Her harvest-time was at the close of the morning service, when the most of the people remained in their respective pews to eat their dinner, which those from a distance brought with them. This was the favorable moment for Mrs. Sniffle's expedition, and darting out of her own seat, she would drop in at another, out with her snuff-box, pass it round, and inquire the news. Staying just long enough to extract the essence of all the matters in her line to be met with there, she would make all haste to the pew of some one from another neighborhood, where she would impart the information she had just received with her own edifying comments, pick up as many additional fragments of facts as she could find, and pass on to another pew, spending the whole of the interval of divine worship in this avocation, and the leisure of the week to come, in spreading among her neighbors these items of news, especially such as come under the head of scandal. It is only

just to the people, however, to add that Mrs. Sniffle was a black sheep in the flock; there was not another like her, and we may well say, happy is that people which is so well off as to have only one Mrs. Sniffle.

Take them in mass and they were a sober, temperate, orderly, devout people, delighting in the ordinances of God's house, and striving together to promote the glory of the Saviour. If you saw them standing in groups around the door before the service began on the Sabbath-day, it was not to trade horses or talk politics, as I have known the practice to be in other places, but more likely it was to speak of the state of religion in their neighborhoods or their hearts, though the young and thoughtless doubtless found topics of conversation more congenial to their unsanctified tastes. And then there was a set that always went over to a little red tavern across the green, where old Mr. and Mrs. Beebe lived, and what they said and did when they got there I will not undertake to say. I wish you could see old Mrs. Beebe standing in the front door, with her hands folded under her checked apron, and her spectacles on her forehead, chatting with everybody that passed, or scolding the boys who loved to stone her geese and sheep which she pastured on the green or in the graveyard. She *was* a character; but her virtues, if any, and faults, if many, will be alike unknown to future generations, for her only chance of immortality in history is while I am writing this paragraph.

Why is it that the choir of a country congregation is always, or often, the source of discord? Every one who knows the internal polity of these societies has met with the singular fact that *the singing* is the most diffi-

cult subject to be managed with harmony, yet a matter that one would think should never make any trouble, much less be a cause of quarrels and divisions. Yet true it is, and in making these records I must introduce the reader to our singing-schools, and let him into some secrets which may be both entertaining and profitable. You will therefore understand that the singing had become about as bad as it could be and retain the name. Deacon Small—a very large man, who could sing nothing but bass, and that very badly—had sung tenor and led the singing for ten years, until forbearance ceased to be a virtue, and some of the congregation, whose nerves were not made of steel wire, began seriously to talk of doing something to improve the music. The deacon said that for his part he should be glad to do anything reasonable, and he had sometimes thought the singing would be better if the young folks would come together once a month or so and practise the tunes with him; he would give his time for nothing, and perhaps something might be done.

But this was not the thing. The deacon's singing was as bad as the choir's, in fact worse, for what he lacked in skill and taste he made up in volume; and his voice, in a part for which it had no fitness, would swell above all the rest so as to make such dire music as no gentle ears could endure without grievous pain, causing strong temptations to *feel wrong* even in church. When, therefore, the reformers heard that Deacon Small proposed to drill the choir into harmony, they thought of hanging up their own harps, for the deacon's instructions could manifestly avail nothing but to make bad worse. They therefore held another consultation, and determined to submit the matter to the congregation,

in full meeting, and make a desperate effort to bring about a change.

Accordingly, when the people assembled for the annual "letting of the pews," the matter was introduced with great caution, and it was proposed, after much discussion, to send to Connecticut (where else should they send?) for a singing-master. Deacon Small was roused. He could see no necessity for such a sudden and expensive measure; he knew as much about singing as any of them, though he said it himself, and he *knew* that they had as good singing as they could expect, and if they wanted any better they must n't go off to hire anybody to come there and teach them a new set of tunes, to go away when they were about half learned and carry all the singing away with him. But the reformers carried the day, and next Sabbath the choir, taking in dudgeon what they chose to consider an affront put upon them and their leader, took their seats in the body of the church below, leaving the front seats of the gallery empty. The pastor saw at a glance the state of things when he went into the pulpit, and beckoning to one of the elders who was a good singer, and always led on communion occasions, to come up to him, he made the necessary arrangements, and as soon as the morning psalm was announced the worthy elder rose in his place, and "pitching the tune," led off Old Hundred, to the edification of the congregation and the discomfiture of Deacon Small, who thought there could be no singing unless he took the lead.

## XVII.

### THE SINGING-SCHOOL.

THE NEW TEACHER.—THE MUSICAL WAR.—THE SHAMEFUL DEFEAT.—GRIEVING THE SPIRIT.

BY a vote of the congregation, a committee was appointed to obtain a singing-master to teach one quarter, for which he was to receive one hundred dollars, and all were at liberty to attend. The committee heard of a teacher and hired him. He came. His name was Bridge. He was a good singer, but a great fop, and a low, ill-bred but cunning fellow, who soon ingratiated himself into the favor of one part of the congregation and disgusted the rest. The school, however, was vastly popular, especially among the young people, who were fond of coming together twice a week and spending the evening sociably. Bridge always gave a long intermission, which was the occasion for all manner of fun among the young people; and then by coming early and staying after school was out, they managed to make the entertainment quite as diverting as a dance, which latter amusement was rarely allowed among the sons and daughters of that church. But before the quarter was out the singing-master was detected in some peccadilloes that rendered his dismissal necessary in the estimation of the more discreet of the congregation. The communication of this decision to the school was the signal for an explosion. A part,

perhaps a majority, acquiesced in the decision and sustained the committee, but others resented it and resisted, declaring that he should stay and they would hire him for another quarter. The parties were now pitted against each other, and for a long time the contention raged with a fierceness that threatened the unity of the church. The pastor, of course, took ground against the teacher, for his moral unfitness to lead the worship of religious people was apparent, and this decided stand of the pastor brought down upon his head the wrath of all the Bridge men, who did not scruple to say that they would keep Bridge even if they lost their pastor.

The Bridge party circulated a subscription-paper, and had no difficulty in raising the money to hire the teacher for another quarter; for when men get mad they are always willing to pay to have their own way. The elders refused to have him in the choir on the Sabbath day, and so the strange and disgraceful spectacle was presented of part of a Christian congregation employing a man to instruct them in the worship of God, while the officers of the church very properly refused him a place in the service. And this wicked war was prolonged until the second quarter of the teacher expired, when he and his friends resolved to have a great musical festival to wind off with due honor the controversy in which they flattered themselves they had been victorious. They wished to have an address on the occasion, and applied to the pastor to deliver it. He answered that he would not speak if Bridge was to lead the singing, but would cheerfully give them an address if some one else were selected to take the place of a man whom he regarded as utterly unfit to conduct the devotions of God's people. The answer was far from

being satisfactory. Bridge must sing, as the festival was designed for his glory. So the party cast about to find a speaker for the great occasion, and were at length successful in obtaining one in the person of a noted pulpit orator in a distant city, deposed from the ministry, who was glad to make his way into another congregation where he knew he could never speak on the invitation of the pastor. This irregular and disgraceful act of the Bridge party closed the campaign. The last performance was condemned by the people, and the second engagement having run out, Bridge departed, to find employment elsewhere. The party that had supported him became ashamed of their own conduct, gradually returned to their respective duties, said as little as possible about their late rebellion, and submitted themselves in silence to the constituted authorities.

But it was not until after many years that the wounds which this affair had made were healed. The feelings of one part of the people were alienated from the other; the more serious and substantial of the congregation had opposed the Bridge party, which was composed of the younger and lighter portion; the pastor had been so deeply involved in the struggle that his preaching was not received with so much affection and tenderness by those from whom he had differed; and it may be that the Word of God was not accompanied with that spirit of prayer without which it can never be effectual, and the day of final account can alone disclose the extent of the mischief wrought by those men who determined to put in peril the peace of the church for the sake of carrying their own points.

I have been so particular in stating the facts in this transaction that it may serve as a warning to other

churches; for great is the responsibility incurred by that man who puts himself in the way of the peaceful progress of the gospel. The Holy Spirit never lingers among a people after strife has begun, and who will answer for the guilt of grieving away the Messenger of Heaven.

Now that the root of bitterness was cast out, the good pastor addressed himself with all diligence to repair the breaches that had been made. He brought the power of divine truth to bear upon the consciences of the congregation, and with his characteristic fidelity, tenderness, and skill he plied them with those considerations which, in the course of time and under the blessing of God, resulted in the restoration of peace. Some of the most reasonable and pious of the Bridge party were frank enough to go to him and confess their error, and to express their strong sense of admiration of his firm and Christian deportment during the whole affair; but others quieted their consciences by treating their minister with a little extra attention, while they saved their pride from the manliness of an apology when they knew they were wrong. But the singing; that was no better, but worse rather. Those on whom reliance had long been placed as permanent singers were disgusted and driven from the gallery; a set of tunes unknown to the people was introduced; the new choir were unable to sing without their leader; they soon scattered. Deacon Small returned to his post and rallied a few of the old singers, and for a time "Dundee," and "Mear," and "Wells," with one or two other tunes of equal claim to antiquity, were performed upon the return of each Sabbath with a regularity and uniformity worthy of striking commendation.



## XVIII.

### SACRED MUSIC.

LOWELL MASON. — PRAISE OFFERINGS. — COMPETENT TEACHING. — UNSUITABLE LEADERS. — ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

THE state of things which I have described lasted until it could be borne no longer. And I make this remark seriously. It is *intolerable* that God should be mocked with such *praise* as is offered to him in some of our churches. Not to say anything of it as a matter of taste, — to gratify the ear of man and exalt the affections of the worshipper, — there is another light in which it should be viewed, and a light in which it is very seldom viewed by our churches. I refer to the great truth that *God deserves better praise* than he gets in those temples where little or no attention is paid to the culture of sacred music. If that consideration were imprinted on the hearts of Christians they would from principle spend time and money in qualifying themselves and others to sustain this part of public worship with “spirit and understanding also.”

Once I was in Boston, and on Sabbath morning went to the church where Lowell Mason led the singing, with a choir that had long enjoyed the instructions of that eminent and able master. I did not know that he was the leader, and was not prepared to expect anything more than the ordinary singing of a church in that refined city. But those words: —

“ Welcome, sweet day of rest,  
That saw the Lord arise,”

came over my soul as if the morning stars were singing their Maker's praise with the opening of another Sabbath; and as the hymn, sweet in its own melody, but sweeter in the melody which rich music lent it, swelled on my ear, I was carried away by the power of the *praise*, now rapt into a glow of ecstatic feeling, now subdued by the melting tones that fell softly and sweetly on my responding heart. Yet did I not think of the singers, or the leader, or the great organ whose deep bass rolled through the temple. I forgot all these, and *felt* only that we were praising God, in the beauty of his Sabbath and sanctuary, and that He who delights in a pure sacrifice was receiving a warm tribute of praise from that worshipping people.

“ My willing soul would stay  
In such a frame as this,  
And sit and sing herself away  
To everlasting bliss.”

Now it is very true that all congregations cannot have Lowell Mason or Thomas Hastings to teach them to sing, nor is it needful in order that the music may be such as shall be pleasing to God and edifying to the people. It requires no sacrifice. The practice essential to success in this delightful art is itself a source of elevated and rational pleasure to those engaged in it, especially to the young, and when the science has been cultivated until *skill* is attained, there is scarcely anything that contributes more to the harmony and happiness of the social circle than this. And if our country churches would regard this department of public wor-

ship as an *offering to God*, who is not willing to be served with that which costs nothing, but who loves to lend his ear to the music of his children when they sing as they ought, it seems to me that there would be a wonderful change in the style of music. In every church there would be an association of those who have musical taste and talent, and they would labor diligently to elevate the standard of public sentiment on this subject, and of their success there could be no doubt. Pastors have failed of their duty in this matter, for if the pulpit had been faithful in exhibiting the claims of this part of divine worship upon the conscience of the people, there can be no reason to suppose that it would be looked upon with that indifference with which most of our churches regard it.

Our old congregation having become thoroughly satisfied that the singing must be improved and placed on a basis of progressive advancement, sought and found another teacher, who, at the general desire of the people, came to establish a school and lead the singing on the Sabbath-day. This time Deacon Small and all agreed to the proposition. The young people and some of the older ones attended a school one evening every week for several months; the old standard tunes, as "Old Hundred," "St. Thomas," "Tamworth," "Silverstreet," etc., were practised over and over again, till the whole "rising generation" could sing them with propriety; a few new tunes were learned, and learned well, and when the teacher went away there were several in the school who were well qualified to take the lead. The selection was made by the school, who voted by ballot; the elders confirmed the nomination, and after that everything went on smoothly. Deacon Small was

considerably mortified that nobody voted for him as chorister, but he kept his mortification to himself; and each succeeding winter a school was opened for the instruction of the young in sacred music, and no difficulty was afterward heard of on that head. But there is reason for the question propounded at the opening of this record, "Why is the choir so often the source of discord in the church?" I have heard it said that singers are naturally nervous, sensitive people, or (to go a little farther into the philosophy of the thing), that the mental and physical organization of those who have the faculties essential to a good singer is so delicate that this class of the human race is more easily discomposed by trifles than any other. But without speculating upon the hidden cause, the fact is well known that trouble from this quarter often comes,—trouble that the influence of the pastor and the wisdom of the officers are sometimes powerless to remove or relieve.

Frequently have I seen old-established congregations shaken to their very centre by these musical feuds when the matter in controversy was so unimportant, the ground of offence so puerile that it can be reconciled neither with religion nor common-sense. Perhaps some one of the singers has heard somebody say that some one else said that the singing was not as good as it used to be. This remark, perhaps made inadvertently, is repeated and magnified; the choir hear of it and refuse to sing. Sometimes an unpopular individual takes a seat in the choir, and the rest resolve to quit the seats unless the unwelcome guest withdraws, and he determines to stay if he stays alone; and so they leave him in full possession. But the most of these troubles grow out of the employment of unsuitable men as

leaders of singing in our churches. I have known men of notoriously immoral lives to be appointed to this responsible office, and then most righteously would the sober and discreet members of the church rise in opposition and refuse to be led in their hymns of praise by a man of profane lips. Here is no place to argue the question whether an unconverted person should ever be allowed to lead the singing in the house of God, though I cannot avoid entering a dissent to that doctrine sometimes advocated, that because you would not call on a man of the world to pray in public, so you should not invite or allow him to sing God's praise in public. There is a natural distinction in the two cases which can scarcely be made plainer by illustration. But it ought to be borne in mind by all parties, in every congregation, that the singing is a part of divine worship, the regulation of which belongs exclusively to the church, or the spiritual officers of the church, and while the authority to order it is in their hands, it is not to be expected that any man of corrupt life will be allowed to take the lead.

And if on them rests the responsibility of excluding from the orchestra those whom they regard as unfit to be there, most emphatically does it devolve on them to take measures so to train the voices of the people that with every Sabbath's services there may go up to God acceptable praise in the courts of his house.

## XIX.

### THE DANCING-SCHOOL.

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.—RURAL DANCING.—THE GRAND BALL.—SOLEMN DANCERS.—THE FUNERAL SERMON.

MY reminiscences of our country choir lead me to remark that, rather than suffer the evils which so frequently arise from the system of "choirs," I would greatly prefer the good old-fashioned way of having a leader or precentor, who shall stand in the face of the congregation and lead the praises of the people. This plan, which still prevails in a few churches in our country, and in many of the churches in "the old country," secures several important ends. It leads the whole people to feel that they are to unite in the public song; that singing is an act of divine worship in which each of them is expected to bear a part; that they must qualify themselves and their children to perform this duty acceptably, and therefore they must *all learn to sing*. There is something delightful in the sight and the sound of a whole congregation lifting up their voices in unison and harmony in the praise of their God and King; and sweeter far to my ear, and sweeter far, it seems to me, must it be to Him who listens in heaven, to hear the warm, full hymn from the great congregation than the most finished and exquisite performance of a worldly choir, if the *heart* is not there.

I perceive that this letter has taken the form of an essay on church music rather than on ancient history, as I proposed. But the subject suddenly took this turn, and has run to this point, where I must leave it. And I would not leave the reader with the impression that such troubles as I have described were common in our old congregation. The farthest from it possible. Years would roll by and not an event of a troublous kind would occur to make one year memorable rather than another; and to show how rare were such occurrences as those which laid the foundations of this letter, I may say that these events transpired when I was so young as to know nothing of what was going on, but they were talked about for many years after, and I have written the history according to tradition and not from memory. People would often speak of the Bridge excitement very much as we speak of the Shays's rebellion, or the Revolution, — something that happened once, but never to be expected again. Probably few churches could be found in the length and breadth of the land where there was more peace and less contention than in ours during the ministry of Mr. Prime.

Do you suppose that they had dancing-schools within the limits of that congregation? I am at a loss for an answer to my own question, for if I have not mentioned before I should now remark that there were other congregations intermingled with ours, so that a large part of the population was under other influences, and there were families also that belonged to no church, for whose views and practices no one could answer; and when these facts are remembered it will not seem so strange that now and then the young folks were foolish enough to get up a dancing-school in the winter.

Mr. Prime was not in the habit of denouncing the amusement of dancing as sinful in itself, or of threatening church discipline if any of the members indulged in it. But he frequently alluded to it as an amusement unsuited to persons of sense, an idle waste of time, and leading to evils many and serious. In this way he was able to repress the desire for a dancing-school among the most of the young, and the more intelligent and pious of the church discountenanced and forbade it in their families. Once in a great while when the young folks went off for a sleigh-ride, or assembled for an evening tea-party, they would wind up with a dance, and sometimes a "ball" would be had at the tavern in front of the Old White Meeting-house; but in these cases the leaders were usually young men from the neighboring villages, who had a sort of acknowledged right to set the fashions, and our boys and girls were not slow to follow.

One winter some of the youngsters determined to have a regular dancing-school at the tavern just named, and after a great deal of management they succeeded in getting enough to agree to attend. The school was kept up through the winter, and toward spring they were to have a "public" or a grand *finale* to their winter performances. Invitations were sent to all the villages within twenty miles, for the fashionables to attend, and every arrangement was made for one of the most splendid displays which that old quiet town had ever witnessed. No expense was spared to adorn the room, and many of our young ladies, by dint of coaxing and crying, had obtained, *for the first time in their lives*, permission to attend a ball. Close by the tavern, and in full view of the ball-room window,



lived one of the young ladies who had in the early part of the winter been a member of the dancing-school, but who had been taken sick, and as the time for the ball drew nigh she was evidently drawing nigh to death. She died on the morning of the very day on which the ball was to come off in the evening. The news of her death spread rapidly over the town, and the most active of the getters-up of the performance were in doubt as to what course it would be necessary to take. One of the *managers* was said to be betrothed to the young lady, a member of the school, now a corpse in sight of the windows. What should they do? The managers met in the afternoon and held a consultation. The *betrothed* was not there, but he sent word that there would be a manifest propriety in postponing the amusements of the evening. But the rest demurred. Everything is now ready, all the expense is incurred and will be doubled if they defer; the company will assemble; and so it was decided to go on. They did. The young ladies came together, but before the dancing began one of them was looking out of the window and saw a dim light over in the chamber of death, where watchers were sitting by the corpse of one who had hoped to be on the floor with them. A chill came over the young lady as she was looking out; she mentioned to one near her what she had seen, and how *it made her feel*; the sadness spread over the group in that corner, and one began to complain of sickness and to make an excuse for going home, and then another, till all whose consciences were any way tender had fled from the hall of mirth. But there were many left. "On went the dance." And though Death was at hand, and one of their number was in his arms, they danced till morning.

This was the last dancing-school and the last ball for many, many years in that place.

The next Sabbath Mr. Prime gave them a discourse on the subject, with special reference to the events of the past week. It was the funeral sermon of Mary Leland; and did not the hearts of those youth thrill when he drew the contrast between the chamber of death and the ball-room, the grave-clothes and the ball-dress, the mourners and the revellers? And when he drew from that striking providence a lesson on the vanity of earthly pleasures, and besought the young of his flock to turn away from the follies of time and become wise for everlasting life, you might have seen the young men hanging their heads in shame, while the young ladies all over the house were weeping with grief that asked no concealment.

## BEGINNINGS OF REVIVAL.

HOUSEHOLD MEETINGS. — CONVERSION OF CHILDREN. — CLERICAL MEETINGS.

ONE of the most solemn meetings that I have attended in the course of my life was at the house of Elder Kirtland Warner, when I was about ten years old. I was younger than that, rather than older, and now am older than I would like to say; but I remember *that* meeting, the men that prayed, what they prayed for, *how I felt*, and how the tones of their voices fell on my young heart like the voice of the living God. It was a meeting of the pastor, the elders, and all their families, with those parents and children that lived near the house of the elder in which they met. The house was crowded, and the stairs that went up in the hall were covered with children. I was in the number. It seemed that the pastor had observed that, through all the families of the elders, embracing a great number of children, not one was a professor of religion. The fact was a painful one, and the good man was alarmed. He laid the truth before the elders, and they were deeply moved. They prayed over it, and after serious deliberation resolved to assemble all their children and commend them unitedly and affectionately to Him who had promised to be a God to them and to theirs.

The meeting was held as I have said. And when Mr. Prime stated the solemn fact that had called them together, there was a stillness like death over the house, and as he went on to speak of the prospect before the church when the young were thus growing up in sin, and the prospect before the young when they were thus hardening their hearts under religious instruction and in the midst of the gospel, you might hear a deep sigh from the hearts of the fathers, and see the tears on the cheeks of the mothers, and soon the children caught the impression of the hour, and sobbed in the grief of their souls at the thought of coming judgment and no preparation to meet an offended Judge! The pastor prayed, and one after another of those elders — mighty men in prayer they were — went down on their knees, and with earnestness that would take no denial, and with such strong crying and tears as parents only know when pleading for their perishing offspring, they besought the Lord to have mercy on them and save them by his grace. And then they sung psalms, Elder Tompkins leading, and such of the company joining as could command their voices in the midst of the deep emotion that was now pervading all hearts. I know the Holy Spirit was there that day. I felt his convicting power. I feel the force of the impressions then made this moment. It was not then that I was led to the Saviour. But afterward when the allurements of a gay world were around me, and a thousand influences combined to draw me down to ruin, the impressions of that meeting, and such meetings, were like hooks of steel to hold me out of hell. God be praised that I was there, and I hope to praise him for the privilege when I meet those elders with the other elders around the

throne. There were many children present older than myself, and they, too, were much affected by the exercises. I recollect that we were out of doors at the intermission (for we met at eleven o'clock in the morning, and with an interval of half an hour remained until three P. M.), and then we had an opportunity to talk the matter over together. We were all solemn; not one was disposed to play or to make fun of any kind, but we said to one another in our own way that we meant to try and be good. Some of the girls got together in one of the bedrooms upstairs and had a little prayer-meeting by themselves during the intermission; and all went from that place that day with serious minds, and some were pricked to the heart.

Another meeting of the same character was held the next week in the house of an elder in another part of the congregation, and so they were continued from house to house for three months. And God heard the prayers of his people. Three of the children of Joseph Stewart were converted immediately, and are living now to bless God for those meetings; and three children of another elder were also converted, and some of the others, and the good work extended beyond the families of the elders into the congregation, and many precious souls were brought into the fold of Christ.

I would like to go back to one great revival that pervaded the congregation, bringing the whole town under its influence, and from the commencement, progress, and fruits of it, show what old-fashioned revivals were, and what revivals the churches need now. May God send them often, and mighty ones, till the day of final consummation!

The pastor had been long lamenting the apparent

withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from the church. His ministry did not seem to be blessed to the conviction and conversion of sinners, and his hands began to hang down in discouragement. Perhaps his own soul had partaken of the general apathy, and his preaching had been less pungent, his prayers less fervent and faithful, and his anxieties had subsided. As the hands of Moses sunk unless they were held up by Aaron and Hur, so did his. About this time he was called to attend a great ecclesiastical meeting in a distant part of the country. He was necessarily absent several weeks. During his absence the people met regularly on the Sabbath day to hear a sermon which was read by one of their own number, and to pray for themselves and their beloved pastor far away. They did not run to other churches to hear other ministers, but hovered around their own altar and enjoyed themselves *there* far more than in strange temples. This gives a hint worth remembering. Mr. Prime was also benefited by his intercourse with ministerial brethren whom he met at the assembly from all parts of the country. Fifty years ago our ecclesiastical assemblies were more *spiritual* than they are now; they were less divided by the introduction of exciting party questions, and ministers came together as so many brothers of one family, running into one another's arms after a long separation. We sometimes had such meetings on a small scale up in the old congregation; the ministers from neighboring churches would assemble to transact church business; and it was all done with such a spirit of harmony and brotherly love, and so much time would be spent in preaching and praying that a hallowed influence always was exerted by them on the people. And as the minis-

ters quartered at different houses during the meeting, they conversed freely and faithfully with parents and children on the concerns of their souls, and lasting and saving impressions were thus made on many minds. So it was, in a still higher degree and in a more extended circle, when the great assembly of ministers from widely distant places was convened. Its sessions were expected with intense interest, as holy convocations of holy men; it was attended with demonstrations of strong fraternal regard, and so many tokens of the divine favor that the annual meeting was a precious season to all who were permitted to enjoy its delightful influence. The results I shall refer to in my next letter.

## XXI.

### HINDRANCES TO REVIVAL.

THE GOSPEL CALL.—POWER OF PRAYER.—“FOURTH OF JULY” BALL.—THE PRAYER-MEETING.

FROM such a meeting as I have described, Mr. Prime returned to his scattered flock and secluded parish. His own soul had been refreshed and quickened. He had heard of the power of the gospel in other parts of the land; of great revivals of religion, such as he longed to see among his own people; he had been roused by the exhibitions of zeal among his brethren, and had been impressed more deeply, perhaps, than ever that *each* pastor is responsible for the improvement of his own vineyard. He came home with a firm determination, relying on the strong arm of sovereign grace, to deliver his own soul from the blood of his people by doing his whole duty in the fear of God. He was not a man of impulse, and when he took a resolution like the one just named, it was a *principle* in the framework of his soul, to be developed steadily and totally until all its meaning and power were answered. He would do what *duty* had bade him, and if sinners were saved and saints edified, he would rejoice and give God the praise; if his labors were vain and the seed never bore fruit he would still be clear, and God should accomplish his own righteous will. He now entered upon a thorough exhibition of divine



truth in a light more vivid and in a style more pungent and convincing than he had ever preached before. He took the law of God and held up its majesty and purity with a grandeur that startled the hearer, as if the distant thunder of Sinai were breaking on his trembling ear. Perhaps his *forte* was to take what we call *the strong truths* of the gospel, and present them before the mind with such transparent clearness that men could not shut their eyes against the convictions thus brought home to their hearts. When he had pressed on them the claims of the divine law, its high requisitions, its exceeding breadth and strength, which no man since the fall of Adam had fully met and answered, he then set forth the utter helplessness of self-ruined man without the interposition of divine recovering grace. Then came the duty of the sinner to repent and turn to God, and the rich provisions of salvation in the full and glorious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ! I wish that you could have heard him on these themes at this period of his ministry. He was in the very acme of his physical and mental powers, his soul roused by communion with kindred souls and with God, while the souls of his people were before him as priceless, yet perishing treasures, for whose salvation he must labor and give account. Oh, how the gospel shook the walls of the Old White Meeting-house when he opened the terrors of the law to persuade men to flee from the wrath to come, or hung out the love of a crucified Redeemer to win the wandering back to the foot of the cross! Often do I seem to hear those calls, as if time had travelled back; and I were again sitting under the old high pulpit listening to the trumpet-voice of my father.

Such preaching, joined with prayer, for he was a man of prayer, could not be in vain. It was followed up with judicious and efficient means to awaken general attention among the people. Prayer-meetings were established, if not already in operation, in all the neighborhoods. The elders met often with the pastor for private supplication at the throne of grace, and from house to house they went, two and two, warning and entreating men to turn unto God. Soon the effects became visible. The house of God on the Sabbath day was solemn as eternity. The evening meetings were attended by greater numbers than before, and a spirit of prayer was evidently poured out upon those who met. Here and there a sinner was awakened and came to the pastor to learn what to do to be saved.

The Devil saw it and trembled. He knew that his power was in danger, and resolved to have a fight before he gave up. His first attempt was a cunning stratagem to lure the young away from serious things by stirring them up to the vanities of the world. The "Fourth of July" was just at hand, and the Devil put it into the hearts of the young to get up a grand "ball" to be held in the tavern that stood across the green directly in front of the meeting-house. This was a masterly stroke of policy. A ball was a novelty almost unheard of in that place; and at that season of the year it was altogether a singular affair. But with the aid of some blades from distant villages the arrangements were made in spite of the remonstrances, and even the entreaties of the pious portion of the people. Some of the *daughters* of church members were so much elated with the idea of going to a ball that no means short of compulsion would avail to deter them. Mr. Prime, true

to his office, on the Sabbath before it was to come off, having failed by private counsel to break it up, went into his pulpit girt with the armor of God, and there denounced the intended dance as a bold and damnable device of Satan to resist and quench the Holy Spirit that in great mercy had at last come down among them on a visit of salvation. He warned the young of the desperate game they were playing, of the madness of rushing against the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler, and of the peril in which they put their immortal souls by engaging in worldly amusements with the avowed design of dissipating religious impressions, whose presence they could not deny. This note of alarm had the desired effect upon some of the more conscientious, but the most of them had gone so far in the arrangements that they were not willing to give it up. So Mr. Prime had supposed; and, therefore, in anticipation of just this result, at the close of his sermon he gave notice that the church would be open for public prayer in behalf of the "ball," the meeting for prayer to commence at the time set for the "ball" to begin.

Was there ever such a thing heard of since dancing was invented? Who but Mr. Prime would have thought of a prayer-meeting for a "ball"? And both meetings were held; the praying people, fathers, and mothers, and many of their children with them, came to the meeting-house, and (it being in July) the doors and windows were wide open while they sang and prayed, and within hearing the young folks assembled in the ball-room, and to the sound of the fiddle danced while the church prayed. The solemn psalm was heard in the ball-room, and the screech of the fiddle crossed the green and grated on the ears of the worshippers of God

in his sacred courts. But the ball broke down. It was hot work to dance in hot weather, with the fire of a guilty conscience burning like hell in the breast. It is a fact that some of the company were convicted of sin on the floor that very day, and were afterward added to the church. One of them said he felt, when he tried to dance, as if his heels were made of lead. He had no heart for it. The revival went on gloriously, and the Devil determined to try again.

## XXII.

### FIGHTING THE REVIVAL.

THE HORSE-RACE. — THUNDER OF THE PULPIT. — LIGHTNING OF THE LAW. — MEETINGS AND VISITS.

THE next demonstration against the revival in our church was in the form of a horse-race, and it is not strange that under these circumstances the movement was attributed to the Evil One. This is a sport peculiarly his own. In it and about it there is so much of *his* spirit and *his* work that any one might know that the life-giving genius of the whole thing belongs of natural right to the Devil. There was a cluster of houses around the meeting-house, and another half a mile from it on each side, and the ground a dead level between, and this was the arena selected by a set of devil-inspired men for a horse-race. In a quiet community like ours, an operation of this kind could not fail to set the whole mass in commotion. It was very rare that in any part of the town the thing was attempted, but to try it in the very heart of the place, in the public street, in front of the church, was monstrous, and it seems incredible that men could be found with hardihood enough to undertake it. When Mr. Prime saw the handbills posted up in the streets announcing the race to come off the next week, he called on two or three leading men to engage them in the necessary steps to prevent the projected outrage. But, as if to show how

successfully the Evil One does sometimes manage his plots, these men, who were usually as bold as a lion, now frankly said that they could do nothing; people would race horses, and perhaps it was best to let them have their own way. There was only one way to stop them, and that was to threaten legal prosecution, as it was against the law, and this might only make the matter worse. Mr. Prime's holy soul was moved with righteous indignation. To be deserted at such a crisis by those on whom he was wont to rely was a blow he had not expected, and he took his own measures accordingly. He went to his pulpit the next Sabbath and announced his text, "When the enemy cometh in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." In words of fire he warned his people of the flood of vice which was coming in during the week before them, and having stated what unsuccessful steps he had taken to put a stop to it, he entered his solemn and public protest against it in the presence of God, and threw the responsibility on the heads of those who, holding the power to administer the law, had determined to sit still and see it trampled upon by a crew of lawless men. This was the standard which the Spirit of the Lord raised up to meet the emergency. The people were struck with the words of power and truth, as well as with the holy boldness that clothed the preacher's brow, as he portrayed the impending evil, and their consciences smote them that they had been so quiet while the storm had been gathering. At the close of divine service 'Squire Wendell, the "Old Lawyer," as he was called, one of the oldest and most influential of the people, rose in his pew and asked the heads of the congregation to remain for a few minutes

while they considered their duty in view of the truth to which they had just listened. A resolution was then introduced by him and unanimously adopted, appointing a committee to prosecute to the extremity of the law all persons who should engage in the proposed races, and denouncing the practice as one which no good citizen or Christian would uphold. That was an end of the horse-race. Mr. Prime broke that up effectually. The managers heard of the determined measures that had been adopted, and very wisely *postponed* the race on account of the *lameness* of one of the horses that never got well enough to run in that neighborhood. The revival went on.

There were many things about that revival which I remember with peculiar interest, but which will not strike the reader as peculiar. The stillness of the evening meetings was most remarkable. These were held in the district school-houses, and being conducted chiefly by the elders, consisted almost entirely of singing and fervent prayer. There was no irregularity, no noise, seldom a sob, sometimes a deep sigh that might be heard over the whole house, but there were at all times such tokens of Divine power as could not be mistaken or evaded. And when the hour was spent the people seemed unwilling to go, and would still sit on the seats, and converse with each other on the state of religion in their own souls, and sometimes they would pray together again, or some one would strike up a tune with some favorite hymn, as —

“Jesus! and shall it ever be,  
A mortal man ashamed of thee?”

and then the meeting would seem to be begun again. We had no “anxious seats,” but the pastor urged all

those who wished to have conversation on the subject of religion to visit him at his study, or to call on any of the elders; and he spent as much time as he could in going from house to house instructing the young, directing the inquiring, examining the grounds on which the new converts were resting their trembling hopes, and exhorting the careless to awaken from their stupidity and lay hold on eternal life. In labors he was abundant. But no labor was too great for him if thereby he might save the souls of his people. And the Spirit of the Lord seemed to be on him and with him, so that his words were set home upon the conscience with a cogency that impelled conviction, and made any open resistance useless. The deep depravity of the human heart was in the way, and Mr. Prime was as powerless to deal with that as a child. But he dealt out the potent truth, and the *omnipotent* Spirit did the rest. Sinners were slain and made alive, and there was joy in heaven over repenting souls.



## XXIII.

### THE REVIVAL WORK.

ITS THOROUGHNESS. — THE STUBBORN HEART. — BLESSED  
REMINISCENCES. — HOW TO WIN SOULS.

I DO not know the reason, perhaps others can account for it, though I only know the fact that in the revivals of fifty years ago conversions were not so sudden as they now are. It was no unusual thing for a person to go six weeks, and sometimes even six months, under deep conviction of sin; and it was not considered strange, though at present we should give a man up almost as a hopeless case who should resist serious impressions so long as that. Perhaps the mode of instructing awakened sinners is more philosophical now than it was then — I do not believe it is more scriptural — and they may be led more directly to the contemplation of those classes of truth which demand the entire acquiescence of the heart in the act of submission to God. But one thing is quite as certain, and that is, there were fewer spurious conversions then than now; and our modern revivals are to be tested as to their comparative value by this as well as other facts. Where the instruction given to the awakened is evangelical and sound, calculated to lead the sinner to look well to the ground on which he rests his soul, and to make sure work for eternity, few cases of “falling away” occur when the revival subsides. But in those excitements where sin-

ners are told to submit, and as soon as *they say* they are willing, are assured that they are converted, as it is often the case, it is to be expected that many will deceive themselves, and by-and-by will manifest their mistake to the grief of the church and the shame of the cause.

This revival began in the heart of Mr. Prime, and spread gradually but widely among the hearts of his whole people. The most remote hamlets of the congregation, some of them lying twelve miles apart, and six from the church, were pervaded by the power of the Holy One, and many a humble home was made joyful with the songs of new-born souls. It was confined to no age. The young were the most frequent subjects, for there were few hearers who had grown old in sin. But many young heads of families were brought in who immediately erected the family altar, and as long as they lived were consistent and active Christians. One or two gray-headed men who had stood for years as monuments of sparing mercy were now made monuments of sovereign grace, rescued at the eleventh hour from the verge of ruin.

A stout-hearted and stout-bodied farmer who had reached the half-way house of life was convicted of sin. He had been a pattern of morality in the world, and no man could say that Mr. McAlley was ever known to do that which was wrong to a neighbor. But he had in his breast a wicked heart of unbelief; and when the Holy Spirit touched that heart, Mr. M. felt that he was a sinner and must be born again. At first he tried to build a hope of final salvation on the moral life he had led, and the many good things he had done for the church. And no one was more liberal to support the

gospel and to contribute to every charitable object than he; but what were these things to quiet a conscience that God had roused, and to save from hell that God had threatened to all who do not repent and believe. The stricken sinner turned with disgust from his own righteousness, and sought the Saviour as the only ground of hope. He went to his pastor for advice in this hour of deep distress, and was told to *repent* and *believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ. He went away and came again. Again he received the same counsel, and Mr. Prime prayed with him, and endeavored to convince him that he was resisting the Holy Spirit, refusing to submit to the humbling terms of the gospel, and to accept salvation as the free gift of God. Mr. McAlley would not believe that he was thus proud and rebellious, but declared again and again that he was willing *to do anything* in the world if God would only have mercy on him. Thus he was flying back to his own works all the while, and trying to work out a plan *of his own* that would answer instead of that plan which strips the sinner of his own merit, and lays him a helpless beggar at the footstool of sovereign mercy. One Sabbath-day, after he had been under conviction for some months, he followed Mr. Prime home from church, and entered just as the good pastor, exhausted with his arduous labors, had thrown himself into his great arm-chair. Mr. McAlley began: —

“ Well, Mr. Prime, I’m pretty much discouraged. I have tried to do what you have told me; I have prayed and prayed, and tried to repent and believe, and I do not see that I can do anything more.”

The kind-hearted pastor looked up at him as the farmer stood in the middle of the study, and said: —

“ Oh, yes, there is one thing more you can do ; you can go down to ruin with your sins on your soul.”

The farmer's spirit was broken by that sudden and awful thought. Was it true that nothing remained for him but a fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation? Had he sinned away his day of grace, grieved the Holy Spirit, and made his own destruction sure? He turned away in silence, and with a crushed heart left the pastor's house for his own. He had some miles to go, and it was in the cool of a summer Sabbath. On his way homeward he was enabled to yield his proud spirit to the gentle reign of Jesus, and to embrace the Saviour in his beauty and love. From that Sabbath he was one of the most exemplary Christians in that congregation. Some years afterward he was chosen an elder in the church, which office he adorned until he was translated to a higher service.

Several other instances to illustrate the pastor's skill in dealing with inquiring sinners, but more to magnify the riches of God's grace, occur to me ; but I have made this narrative already too long. Yet it is well, it is instructive to recall those seasons of revival when the whole congregation, from the centre to its wide circumference, was shaken by the power of the Spirit ; when every house was filled with the influences of the work, and many were brought out of darkness into the gospel's marvellous light. Revivals have since been enjoyed in the same congregation, but the one to which I have referred was the most pervading and powerful, and its fruits were the most permanent.

This is no place, even if I had time, to speak of the means to be employed in the promotion of pure and undefiled revivals of religion. But the experience of

past years is full of instruction on this great subject, a subject intimately allied with the prosperity of Zion and the salvation of men. A pure revival is the work of God's Spirit, whereby the church is awakened to a sense of its obligations and privileges, and in answer to the prayers of God's people sinners are convicted and converted. The *theory* of revivals is very simple, but he that winneth souls is wise. The pastor who desires to see his congregation revived will seek the Spirit for his own soul, and will preach as a dying man to dying men. He will be instant in season and out of season to reprove and exhort. He will not fail to declare the whole counsel of God. Leaning on the arm of the Almighty, he will address himself to the work, and wrestle like Jacob, and plead like Paul. God will hear, and he loves to bless.

## XXIV.

### SPINNING-BEES.

VARIED OFFERINGS. — SOCIAL PLEASURES. — SUPPER AND SERVICES. — PRACTICAL RESULTS.

IN the retirement of a secluded parish like ours, you would hardly look for much in the way of amusements. Of course, we had no theatres nor circus, nor any of the hundred play-houses that abound in this great city. But we had some means of amusement, and if they were not so fashionable or exciting as the play or the opera, they were far more rational, useful, and free from all objections on the score of evil.

Many a city reader never heard of a spinning-bee! Was it a general gathering of the good women of the parish with their spinning-wheels? This may have been the fact in a period of time to which my memory runneth not back, but such was not the meaning of the term in the days of my boyhood. A "bee" was, and is, the name given to a union of forces for the accomplishment of any given enterprise which the strength of one farmer and his "hands" could not achieve. Or it might be that the work ought to be done up at once, and time would be saved by getting the help of the neighbors, or it might be again that they wanted a frolic more than they wanted work, and in all these and other instances it was a common thing to invite the people far and near to come and take hold; and at

such times there was plenty of cider and fun, so that the work was play, and such gatherings were looked upon as pastimes rather than as labors. Such were chopping-bees, and husking-bees, and apple-bees, and the like. Very likely in old, very old times the people did sometimes come together with their wheels, and in concert spin ever so many skeins of yarn at once, helping one another by mutual gossip, and cheered by a social cup of tea. But in comparatively modern times, that embrace the period of my youth, a "spinning-bee" signified a visit given to the minister by his congregation, on which occasion they presented him with articles useful to him in the way of housekeeping, according to the taste and ability of the donor. It was usually held in the winter, and as yarn, of linen or woollen, was the principal article of donation, it came to pass that the name of "spinning-bee" was given to it as its distinctive appellation, though, as I have said, it may be that formerly they brought their wheels also.

The order of exercises was somewhat on this wise: Very early in the afternoon the wagons, or sleighs if there was snow, began to arrive. In that goodly place, and in those goodly times, no sooner was dinner over (and dinner was at noon) than the women began to get ready, if they were going out to tea, and by one or two o'clock they were on the way. *Three* was late, and if by any accident the company was delayed till *four* or *five*, they were given up as "not coming" that day.

As the various teams arrived the farmers' wives came with baskets and bundles, the former well stored with biscuits, doughnuts, and crullers, which were designed for the tea-table, and the bundle containing the more substantial *present* which they had brought in token of

their attachment to the pastor. Some retired room was set apart for the reception of these gifts, and there the pastor's wife received each friend as she arrived, and thanked her kindly for the very welcome offering. One would bring two or three pairs of nice woollen stockings, and she was assured that nothing could be more acceptable. Another had brought some homespun and home-made linen, white as the driven snow, or woollen which her own hands had woven into good substantial cloth for children's clothes; and as she drew forth her goodly gifts, an air of conscious pride was in her face, as she expressed her regret that she could offer nothing better. The pastor's wife expressed her gratitude in very few words, and was scarcely heard before she turned to shake hands with another lady, who had just arrived with a noble cheese. This was the fruit of the giver's own labor; she had managed her dairy herself, with the help of her daughters, each of whom now presented sundry rolls of golden butter, that kings might long to have and not be able to get. Then came others, and by this time the room was full of ladies, all of whom had come laden with the produce of their own industry, and now found a sweet reward of their toil in the thought of bestowing it on those whom they loved. In another part of the house the men-folks were gathered, some of them having taken pains to put into the wagon a few bushels of grain, or a quarter of beef, or something in that line, and they found a place to deposit it, and the minister was now engaged in profitable discourse with them,—a privilege which the most of them had intelligence enough to appreciate and enjoy. Soon the company was all assembled in the parlor of the parsonage, and the rest of the afternoon was spent



in free and easy conversation. Here was a fine opportunity for those living far apart to form acquaintance with one another, and thus the most distant portions of the congregation were united in friendship and good neighborhood, as they never would have been but for these annual gatherings at the minister's house. In one corner of the room, or in another room, the young people were together, amusing themselves as young people will, — some of them, perhaps the children, engaged in some innocent play, and the rest making such entertainment as became their years, while the smothered laugh and the half-hid practical joke which was now and then attempted showed that they understood very well that they were in the minister's house, and that the old folks were within hearing. Thus the afternoon passed away, rapidly and pleasantly, until the tea was ready. The tables — all the tables in the house — were spread in the kitchen, if there was no other part of the house that could be used for such a service, and loaded with the good things which the company had brought. It was not expected that the lady of the house would furnish any part of the entertainment. Some of the more notable women of the parish superintended the table, seeing that everything was in "apple-pie order," and when this was done they would ask out to the "first table" as many of the older set as could be accommodated at once. Perhaps there were places at the table for thirty, and when these had "well drunk," the next set was invited out, and then another, till all, including the little ones, had been served. These various tables were waited upon by some of the young ladies, who esteemed it an honor to distinguish themselves on such an occasion by showing their skill in

one of the most important parts of housekeeping, and if they should thus commend themselves to the favorable notice of any observant youth of the other sex, it would be no matter of surprise.

These operations being now concluded, the company were once more assembled in the front rooms of the parsonage, and the shades of evening giving notice that it was about time to be "getting their things," and starting for home, the pastor begs them to sit still a few moments longer. He then, in few words, and with great propriety of language, speaks of the pleasure which he and his family had enjoyed in the society of their friends, the gratitude which they desired to feel for the varied and substantial proofs of their kindness, and of the rich occasion which he and his people had for thanksgiving to God for the bounties of his providence with which their lives were crowned. He rejoiced that their lot had been cast in the midst of so much that called for grateful acknowledgment, and he indulged the hope that they would so improve their manifold mercies that the good Giver of them all would not be tempted to take them away to bestow them on those who would improve them more to his praise. He then read a psalm, which was sung with great spirit, after which they all knelt down, and he led them to the throne of divine grace in fervent prayer, invoking the choicest of heaven's blessings on them and their households to the latest generation.

This was the signal for breaking up. Each family, as they retired, shook hands with the good pastor and his wife, and made them "promise to come and see them," and with many assurances of continued regard they found the way to their respective vehicles and homes.

After they had all gone, or perhaps on the following day, Mrs. Prime proceeded to parcel out the various commodities, to see what use could be made of matters and things in general which had been received. The most valuable presents had been linen yarn, which was now to be sorted according to its quality and woven by hand; for in those days there were few factories in the country, and none in those parts. Perhaps the whole value of one of these visits to the minister and his family was somewhere about a hundred dollars; but the chief value was in the pledge thus given of affectionate interest, and in the opportunity of bringing the people together sociably, on common ground, once in every year.

## RURAL PLEASURES.

APPLE-PARING BEES.—YOUTHFUL FROLICS.—COUNTRY  
WEDDINGS.—SOLEMN CEREMONIES.

APPLE-PARING bees were fine times, I assure you, and I sometimes feel as if I would give more for one of those winter evenings in the long kitchen, paring apples and telling stories, than for all the fashionable parties, with music and mirth, that I have ever attended. They were chiefly confined to the young folks, and were usually held in the latter part of autumn, or early in the winter. It was customary in those days, when as yet there was no objection to the free use of cider, to make a large quantity of apples into "apple-sauce," which was done by boiling apples in cider after they were peeled and quartered; after which they were stored away for winter consumption. A large quantity of apples were also pared, quartered, and dried by spreading them on boards and exposing them to the sun, or by stringing them and hanging them in the kitchen or on the sides of the house. Now, it was no small affair to prepare a dozen bushels of apples in this way, but the work was light and pleasant, and just such work as it is far pleasanter to do with others to help you, than to do alone; so it was common to assemble the young men and maidens from all the country-side, or at least as many as the kitchen, the scene of action,

would accommodate; and each guest being provided with a knife, and a dish for his chips, the work was begun and carried on with all the sprightliness and fun which you would naturally expect in such a gathering. Plenty of new cider, not strong enough to do much mischief, was at hand, and often passed around, together with the apples and nuts, and all went "merry as a marriage-bell."

The boys and girls were interspersed to give variety to the company; not all the young men on one side, and all the young women on the other, as is the foolish practice in some of the churches where the seats are free; but each choosing his own place, and showing his preferences by slyly locating himself alongside of the fair one whose ear he wished to command during the evening. For the space of a couple of hours the work would go forward with spirit, some paring the apples, and passing them to others, who would quarter and core them; while others still would, with a large needle and thread, string them (like enormous pearls) prepared to be suspended for the process of drying, or to be reserved for boiling. But after *hard work* the young folks would begin to complain of being tired, and some of the more forward would hint the expediency of taking a rest. Soon the labor of the evening was suspended, and an innocent but diverting play was proposed, in which all joined with more spirit and glee than the ball-room would show, while the merry laugh and the happy hit gave the best evidence that these young people could be cheerful and gay without even the knowledge of one of the ten thousand means of amusement which our city-bred youth deem indispensable. Yet these fashionable folly-seekers would probably affect

a blush, and perhaps an exclamation of contempt, if I should add that these country plays not unfrequently sent a young beau to inflict a kiss upon the half-hidden and reluctant cheek of the "one he liked best," or the "handsomest girl in the room," — penalties to be paid for failure in the game. But dreadful as such rustic practices must appear to the refined people who can sit half the night and see a half-clad girl dancing on the stage; dreadful, I say, as our old fashioned rustic plays must seem to the delicate sensibilities of the refined generation that now dwells in these parts, I indulge the opinion that the state of society where these dreadful things were tolerated was a thousand-fold more virtuous and lovely than that secured by the artificial laws of the world of fashion. Certain I am that if any young woman had ventured into an evening party attired as I have seen married and unmarried ladies in parties and concerts in the city of New York, she would have been sent home as one who was ignorant of the first dictates of propriety.

These rural amusements were more commonly and more heartily enjoyed at the country-weddings than at any other gatherings. The parties were more select, and being often composed of those families only who were connected by marriage, or intimately acquainted, there was less restraint thrown around them, and the young people gave themselves a wider margin in the selection of their sports and the imposition of their penalties. Now, I can readily imagine that some will be so fastidious as to slightly turn upward their facial projections if I go on to recount the sports of the young at a country-wedding, and so I must confine myself to as general and cursory a view of the facts as will be

consistent with my duty as an impartial historian of those times.

Am I at liberty to say nothing of the state of society then and there? May I pass by in silence the very form and feature of the folks, in those circumstances where character is developed, and the power of the instruction they received was likely to exhibit more or less of its fruits? I shall therefore tell the truth, and here I will add that you may probably search the country over in vain to find a community where fewer youth were led into habits of vice than in the old country congregation where it is my pride to say I had my "bringing up." But the weddings.

These were not merely times for fun. A marriage ceremony performed by Mr. Prime was a solemn season, long to be remembered by those more immediately concerned, and well calculated to produce a good impression upon all who heard it. The form which he used was simple and expressive, the vows which he required were tender, scriptural, and strong; the counsels he gave were weighty, plain, and so affectionately urged upon the youthful pair that they could scarcely fail to be remembered and referred to in after life. And then his prayers — with what earnestness and strength he would commend them to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and invoke upon them the blessings promised to the families that call on his name. In the midst of these services the most devout solemnity always reigned, and the parents of both parties appeared to feel (as they should) that a most momentous step was taken by their children; and the friends around looked on as if each had an interest at heart in the future happiness of the parties now united in tender and

holy bonds. After the ceremony "cake and wine" were handed around, and moderately partaken of by the company, the days of total abstinence being in the future. But there was no more *drinking* after that single glass, and I never heard that any weddings were disgraced by such scenes of excessive indulgence in liquors as have been common in these latter days. Doubtless many have thought it right and proper to drink wine freely at weddings, though they would abstain from it at other times; and thus the example of sober men has encouraged the young to indulge with less restraint.



## XXVI.

### COUNTRY AND CITY.

DOMESTIC GAMES.—CORN-HUSKINGS.—EARLY INFLUENCES.—  
COUNTRY BOYS.

AT our evening entertainments so long as the minister remained there was very little in the way of amusement; not because he would frown upon it, nor because the amusements were to be such as would offend any serious people; but there was a silent reverence always felt for the pastor that forbade any mirth in his presence, and sobriety was therefore a tribute involuntarily but cheerfully rendered to his exalted worth. The young folks did not feel free to laugh very loud or to play very hard when the minister could see or hear them. He understood this very well, and after a little pleasant conversation with the family and the friends, he withdrew and returned to his home. This was the signal for the sport to begin.

Two or three youngsters immediately proposed as many different plays, which were responded to according to the various tastes of the party, till at length one was selected by the prevailing voices, with the promise to play the others afterward. As at the "apple-paring," the great attraction of these plays was found in the fact that whoever was "caught," either by failing to "catch the plate," or to "find the slipper," or in any other of the operations set on foot, was *condemned* to

“measure off so many yards of tape” with such a young lady, or to walk so many times around the room in company with another, or to perform some similar *penance*, the more of which he had to suffer, the more agreeable it was to him and his partner. Many of these plays required not a little “bodily exercise,” and there was quite as great a demand for gracefulness and agility as in the more fashionable amusement of dancing, which I never knew to be attempted at any of these parties. Sometimes the older folks would catch the spirit of the times, and enter with great zest into the amusements of their children, being reminded of the days long since gone by when they too were young, and delighted in the same “childish things.” Often have I seen a grave man with gray hairs thus renewing his youth, apparently the happiest of the party, and the zeal with which he engaged in the pastimes of the young gave new life to their spirits, and all were as blithe and gay as the birds are on this bright May morning while I write.

It was no very rare thing for them to wind up the plays of a merry evening like this with an amusement which certainly was censurable, and now that I look back upon it I am led to wonder that they should ever venture upon it; I mean a “*wedding in fun.*” True this performance was not attended with any of the *solemnities* that belonged to the serious service, but it was taking an improper liberty with a subject and ceremony not to be trifled with, and I am sorry that I ever had a hand in any follies of that sort. Usually a young couple would be found who had no great objections to standing up side by side, and one of the company would repeat some doggerel poetry, being a burlesque upon a marriage form, which was no sooner over than the whole

company would come in pairs to *salute the bride*; which performance, by the way, was the real object of the play. In such sports as these the youth amused themselves until ten o'clock, which was always looked upon as a late hour to be out. Yet it was nothing strange for them to be so much engaged in their sports as to forget the flight of time until some of the older ones were obliged to remind them that it was high time to adjourn.

No space is left for me in this letter — and it will not do for me to resume the theme again — to say anything of several other “country pastimes” which were common in the days whereof I am now writing. I doubtless had a taste for those things then, and some may say that the frosts of age have not killed the taste quite yet.

“Corn-huskings” were seasons of great enjoyment among the young farmers, when they came together in the barn and husked the Indian corn which had been cut up by the roots and drawn under cover for the purpose. This was a combination of labor and pleasure which I never fancied, and of which I shall have nothing to say. But the great attraction in the way of outdoor winter amusement was sleighing, — parties being often formed of young people, and older ones too, to drive off some twelve or fifteen miles and back again, to the sound of as many strings of bells as each man could raise for the occasion. And I should like, if I had room, to say something about a “wood-bee” that took place every winter, when the farmers brought each of them a “load of wood” to the good minister; or they would meet at his house with their teams, and proceed to the forest where a lot of wood had been cut ready for his use, and

in the course of the day they would haul enough to his door to keep him warm for a year. But all these things must be left untold. I very much fear that these chronicles will be the only authentic records to which posterity can refer for information about my native parish, and it pains me to think how much I must leave to pass into perpetual oblivion.

Those who have but a slight acquaintance with the ways of the world in a great city, or in our thriving villages, and, indeed, in the country at the present day, will be struck with the contrast which these scenes present. I am arrested painfully by the thought that while light literature, and handsome books, and popular lectures, and public meetings, offer intellectual entertainment to our youth, they are also tempted continually by the seductive influences of a wicked world, to indulge in those pleasures that endanger the immortal soul. Here in the city I would live, as I would in China or India if duty called me there; and, therefore, the children whom God has given me must here be trained for this world and the world to come. But often does my heart turn to that secluded parish among the hills, as the very spot where I would educate my children for eternity. What though the elegances of life were there unknown, and nature was in her own dress, and men and women walked and talked without any other rule than virtue and good sense prescribed! What though there were no such schools of morals as *the theatre*, and no schools of manners like the dancing-schools of the metropolis! They had what was better far: the high and holy principles of truth and honesty were taught to them by the fireside, and from the pulpit; they saw the power and beauty of virtue in the example set before them,

and early learned to fear God and keep his commandments.

And then it was something to have the character formed in the midst of nature's glorious works; to have communion with God in the wide temple not made with hands; to hear and see him, not in the wilderness of men's workmanship here in the city, but in the majesty of the forest, in the simple beauty of the purling stream, and to admire his ever-active goodness in the springing, growing, ripening grain. Oh! it is a good thing to get a chain from these to a child's heart; in after life the links will hold him fast, and may be among the last to yield if he is tempted to become a prodigal. Better to make an honest man, though he never wear anything but a tow frock, than to train a finished gentleman and a finished rogue. The chances are a thousand to one in favor of the country. Our city merchants advertising for clerks often say, "One from the country would be preferred." They know where to look for good boys. And although many may have thought my account of our up-country plays not sufficiently refined, I will trust to their good sense to acquit me of any intention to offend their delicate tastes, while I have been yielding to the associations of early life and running back to the days of "Auld Lang Syne."

## XXVII.

### THE SECRET DISCIPLE.

NO RELIGION. — THE PASTOR'S VISIT. — THE CONFESSION. —  
THE TESTIMONY. — DYING TRIUMPH.

NEAR my father's house lived a farmer, who, for a rarity in that neighborhood, was not a religious man. The family was an irreligious family; attending church, it is true, and so far as a public example went, paying a decent respect to the means of grace. It was never known that any one of them (and there was a large number of children) had any serious thoughts on the subject of religion. Some of the boys were openly profane, neglecters of divine worship, and known in the community as bad men. The girls were not gay, but had never made any pretensions to religion; living in the midst of the gospel as if it were sent to all but them.

Of the three or four girls now grown to womanhood, there was one who was known to be more retiring in her manners, gentler in her disposition, and more inclined to attend religious meetings than any of the rest. Yet it was altogether unknown to her own sisters and parents and to every one else that even *she* was ever concerned about her soul. Her quietness of manner and occasional seriousness were attributed to the fact that her health was delicate. It was now drawing nigh to winter, and as the cold weather increased, it was observed that

Sarah had a slight cough and her cheeks, which were naturally free from color, were slightly tinged with a hue that looked like returning health. But it came and went again, and the cough increased, and Sarah's strength, never great, was failing, and before winter was over she was confined to her bed, the marked and sealed victim of consumption. Mr. Prime had watched her for a long time, as he had seen her quietly dropping in at an evening prayer-meeting, or he had detected a fixed attention and apparent interest under the preaching of the Word, and when it was known that her health was failing he had sought an early occasion to see her and speak with her of the things belonging to her everlasting peace. As soon as she could converse with him in private, and so privately that none of the family could hear the *confession* she had to make, Sarah stated that for more than a year past she had cherished a secret and trembling hope that her sins had been forgiven, and that Jesus was her Saviour! He was astonished, almost as if he had seen a vision. To have found a disciple of Christ in that family was a discovery he had never dreamed of making, and sooner far would he have thought of being met with a cold repulse when he came, as a faithful minister and pastor, to urge the claims of the gospel on one whom he feared was insensible to both her duty and danger. He begged her to open her heart with all freedom, and tell him by what way she had been led to cherish such a hope as seemed to be hovering round her soul. Taking courage from the kindness of her good pastor's tone, and finding a sweet relief in the very thought of having one to share a secret which she had never *wished* to keep, Sarah proceeded at once to say that for many years she had been

more or less anxious as to the future; she had listened with attention to the preaching of the Word, and had read the Bible when no one would know it; but the family was so much opposed to religion that she had shrunk from making any disclosure of her feelings, lest she should encounter the ridicule and opposition of her friends. Often the words of her Saviour spoken to those who were afraid to confess him before men had fallen with dreadful power on her burdened heart, and she had prayed for strength to overcome the fear which as a snare had bound her, but hitherto she had not been able to resist the temptation to silence. But now the ice was broken. She had told some one of it, and she was willing and anxious that the world should know that she would be the friend and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Her parents, and brothers, and sisters, were struck dumb at the announcement that one of their number wished to be a Christian! Yet Sarah had always been so mild and patient, silent, and sometimes sad, that they were ready to admit they had always thought "Sally was trying to be good," though she had said nothing about it.

A new scene opened in that house on the day that this revelation was made. Sarah was confined to her bed, and symptoms had appeared, too plain to be mistaken, that a disease which never rests was silently working its way through the frail tenement that confined her spirit; but a joy and peace of more than earthly lustre and loveliness glowed upon her face, and her tongue, loosed as from a silence of life, was now constantly speaking of the wonderful love of him who was her soul's comfort and stay. She called her aged parents to her bedside and told them that she was soon to



die, that *they were soon to die*, that the precious Saviour who had spoken peace to her soul was also able and willing to forgive their sins and prepare them for heaven; but they must make haste to repent, or they would fail of eternal life. And then she pointed to the skies, and spoke of the judgment-seat of Christ, before which she and they would shortly stand, and with all the tender emotion that must swell a dying daughter's heart as she pleads with her gray-haired parents on the verge of the grave, she besought them to seek the Lord till they found him, and make sure work for the dread eternity before them. Then she called her brothers and sisters around her, and from time to time, as she had strength to speak, she commended the Saviour to them as the guide of their youth, begging them to forsake their sins, and to embrace him as their portion. The cold indifference with which these affectionate appeals were received would have been discouraging to any one but a sister who felt that there was hope for them as well as for her; and as long as life lingered with her, and she could summon strength for the dying effort, she ceased not to warn them of the danger of their ways, and to press upon them the love and compassion of him whom she had found so precious.

She lingered along through the winter and the spring, and in the midst of summer death came to her chamber and set her spirit free. There was a vast assembly at her funeral; all the young people from the whole country-side assembled; many of them had long known her and her sisters in the days of their youthful vanity, and having heard that she had secretly turned from the world to God, they were arrested for a moment by the voice of Providence, and came to follow her remains to

the grave. It was at this funeral that I heard the narrative of the death-bed experience of this young lady. Mr. Prime said that it was one of the most triumphant and wonderful scenes he had witnessed in his whole ministry. From the hour that she had found grace to confess Christ before men he had revealed himself to her soul with a fulness of love that passed all understanding. It was dying grace, displayed with a richness and depth that filled her with joys and rejoicings which no words were adequate to convey. If any regret was mingled with her thoughts of an early death, it was drawn from the fact that she had so long concealed her feelings; perhaps if she had at an earlier day avowed the Lord to be her God, she might have persuaded those she loved to come with her in the way to heaven. As the weeks of weariness and declension wore away, her soul renewed its strength, and delighted in flying nearer and nearer to the celestial world. Visions, not of fancy, but visions of revealed glory, such as the soul sees when sin is dying daily and loveliness is rising in beauty and strength on the ascending spirit, now opened to her enraptured eye, and she described her glorious views with an eloquence and fervor that filled her friends with wonderful awe! They knew not what it meant. Their ears had never heard such sounds; the very walls of the house were strangers to the voice of prayer and praise, and with silent amazement the old parents sat by the side of that dying bed, and as if stupefied by the sight, beheld their daughter trying her wings for a flight to the throne of God. For many days before her departure she lived in a frame of mind such as few saints attain, and at last, when the hour of her departure came, she cried: "O grave! where is thy

victory? O death! where is thy sting?" and with a smile that would have looked sweet on a seraph's brow, she fell asleep in Jesus.

The funeral made a deep impression on the great assembly, and not a few of the young people were awakened to a sense of their own condition. The death of Sarah was thus made the life of others, so that what she had failed to do by her living precepts, the grace of God was able to accomplish through her dying testimony.

## XXVIII.

### THE FORGER.

THE YOUNG LAWYER. — BEYOND HIS MEANS. — CRIME AND FLIGHT. — LOVE AND CAPTURE. — WAGES OF SIN.

I N our congregation, but residing at some distance from the church, and in a populous neighborhood, there was a family of more than ordinary intelligence and refinement. The gentleman had been in professional life in a distant city, and having acquired property retired to our pleasant region, and fixed his residence on a large farm which he had purchased. Dr. Jones mingled but little with the people, his tastes leading him rather to the retirement of his books and the society of a few friends who sought him out. His chief pleasure was in his family, consisting only of his wife and daughter, with a nephew of his own name, who had lived with him as his son, and was destined to be *in law* acknowledged as such when the young man and the doctor's daughter were old enough to be married. Young Jones had studied law, and having been admitted to practice, he settled down in the village near the Old White Meeting-house, and entered life with the finest prospect of property and honor. He and his cousin had loved from childhood; both were gifted with charms of person and mind that are not often equalled, and when they were married it was a common remark that a "handsomer couple were seldom seen." Young

Jones was known as an amiable youth, and without those bold and manly traits of character that command attention at first glance, he was silently and gradually winning his way into the confidence and esteem of the community. His father-in-law cheerfully supplied the young beginners with the means of starting in the world, and never did a brighter life lie in the distance than that on which they looked. But Jones found it slow work to get into business. He went into court with no cases of his own to manage; while others less able than he were busy, and some of them had more than they could do, he was idle. He began to be discouraged. It occurred to him that he must make a show of business if he had none; he would live in style and make a dash, and people would then open their eyes and say: "What a smart young man that must be, to get ahead so fast." To carry out this bad purpose required more means than he could command. He drew upon the doctor as far as he could, until the judicious parent counselled him to live within his income, and by-and-by told him with some plainness that he feared he was going too far and running into debt beyond his ability to pay. The young lawyer had by this time got a taste of the pleasures of *free living*, and had no notion of retracing his steps and coming down. His sweet wife whispered to him that they were not as happy as in simpler days, but he spoke to her of the time when she should shine as one so lovely ought, and flattered her, as women may be flattered by those they love, into silence.

Soon the funds were running low. He borrowed where he could, and his credit, based on his father-in-law's known ability, was sufficient to keep him up, and

a suspicion of his integrity had never crossed the mind of any one. Suddenly, and as if one of the hills had been shaken, it was told in the streets that young Jones had presented a forged note at a bank in a city about thirty miles off. The people could not believe it. But the fact was too true, and he had been successful so far in his wickedness. He had indeed forged the names of some of the most substantial citizens of the place to a note; he had even written his own father-in-law's name; he had got the note discounted, and when it became due it was of course protested, and sent up to our quiet town to be collected, when in an instant the forgery was discovered. What a blow was this to his young wife! happy in her ignorance of his crime, she had caressed him to the hour of the fatal disclosure, and then the sympathy of friends would have fain concealed it from her; but he, the husband of her youth, strained her to his heart, and told her that he was a villain and must fly from an infamous punishment that might speedily overtake him. He did fly. It was late in the autumn — I think the latter part of November — when he left his wife fainting at the horrid news his own lips had brought, instead-of the kiss that she had been wont to receive; and just in the edge of evening of a cold, dark night, he started from his house to fly, he knew not whither, — he cared not, if he could get away from himself and justice.

As soon as it was known that he had fled, the proper steps were taken for his arrest. Yet such was the general feeling of pity for the poor wife that no one was in haste to pursue him. A warrant was, however, issued, and officers despatched who succeeded, after a while, in overtaking him, and he was brought back for trial.

Now was the time to test the strength of principle among our plain people. It would have been a very easy matter to raise the money and pay the note, and perhaps the affair could thus be compromised, and there were many thoughts of doing something to stay the arm of the law. But it would not be right, — that was very plain; and justice must be done, though hearts break. The prisoner was kept in close confinement for several days while there was some delay in the attendance of witnesses; and young Jones, watching his opportunity with sleepless eye, found a chance, in the dead of night, to get out of the house where he was kept under the care of two constables, who had *taken turns* in sleeping *both at a time*. When they waked up their prisoner was gone. The alarm was given, and in a few minutes a number of men were mounted to give chase. A thought struck one of them — he must have been a man of feeling — and stopping the rest, he said to them that “*he knew* Jones would not go out of the village till he had seen his wife; there was no use in chasing till they had searched his own house.” The party therefore proceeded with great caution to the house where the stricken wife still resided, and as they stealthily approached the door there came a cry of anguish from the chamber, which told too terribly that innocence and guilt were wailing in each other’s arms. Not one of the pursuers had a heart to enter and disturb those lovers in their wretchedness, but quietly surrounding the house, they waited for him to emerge and fly. They were not long waiting. The embrace was too painful to be long; the guilty husband tore himself away from the sheltering arms of her who loved him in his fall, and kissing their first-born that lay in his place,

he rushed once more from the home he had cursed, and which he should never enter again. They arrested him but a few steps from the door, so gently that *she* knew nothing of it, and conducted him back to his confinement.

Again he managed to escape, and fearing to repeat his visit, he fled to the mountains. They tracked him first through a light snow that had fallen, but he eluded pursuit for some time, wandering in the woods, sometimes venturing to a farmhouse where he was not known, to get something to eat, but uncertain where to go or what to do. It seemed to be a public duty to secure him if possible, and a large number of citizens turned out in a body, and making diligent search, they found him behind a heap of rubbish in the garret of an old house in which he had taken refuge. He had found already that the way of transgressors is hard. In his haste he had fallen repeatedly and bruised his face and hands; he had suffered terribly from hunger and cold; and when he was dragged from his hiding-place his whole appearance was so changed that his own acquaintance would scarcely believe that this was the young and handsome lawyer whom they had often seen before.

His trial came on and he had no defence to make. He was sentenced to the State prison for ten years, and with a gang of felons was taken from the county jail, and transported in chains to his solitary cell. His heart-broken wife returned to her father's house to wear out her worse than widowhood, while he who was the author of her misery was to drag out his years of punishment in a gloomy prison. He never lifted up his head after he entered. Now and then an old acquaint-



ance would be permitted to look upon him, as he plied his needle, working at a trade, but he gave no sign of recognition. The iron had entered into his soul. His health sunk under the load of ignominy which he felt upon him; and after five or six years' imprisonment he died a convict felon, in a prison hospital, far from that young wife who would have died for him, or with him. Miserable man! And such an end! Yet such is the misery, the interlinking misery, that crime must bring. How many hearts are pierced by that one sting! How many tears, bitter, burning tears of mingled grief and shame did that one wicked deed bring from eyes that else would ever have been lighted with love and joy! It is always thus with sin. It has misery in its train. It makes all the misery there is in this world, — crushes all the hearts, blasts all the hopes, digs all the graves, waters them with tears of anguish, and then stretches itself into the dread eternity, and kindles the fires that feed on the soul forever and ever. Oh, sin, these are thy victories; these are thy stings!

## XXIX.

### MY FIRST GRIEF.

EARLY FRIENDS. — GEORGE WILLIAMS. — SEEKING A SAVIOUR.  
— DEATH AND SORROW. — DISAPPOINTMENT AND CONSE-  
CRATION.

HOW widely varied have been the paths by which those early friends of mine have wandered thus far through life! How many of those paths have already led to the grave! How few to glory! There was one fine boy who was my constant playmate; generous and true, we loved and trusted him. He was the *first* one from whom I ever received a letter. That was when we were yet boys, and he was removed to the city to be a clerk in a store. *That* was thought to be something very great,—a certain passport to independence. He wrote to me a few times while his heart yet yearned for the green hills and forests of the country; but he found new friends and new pleasures in the city. He ceased to write to me, and I ceased to hear of him. He grew to the verge of manhood, ran a brief career of folly and vice, left his business and lost his character, and died as a fool dieth. This was one; and then there were others who have left the old town to be leaders in the church and the State; and many, the most of those who were my companions in youth, are sober, substantial citizens and farmers, tilling the lands their fathers tilled, and worshipping their fathers' God.

In the congregation that joined upon ours, but at the distance of several miles, lived a youth whom I tenderly loved. I have never known any love of the same sort since he left me. We were boys at school together when we first became acquainted, and both being of the same age, with similar tastes and pursuits, it was not strange that we should be bound to each other with an absorbing devotion, such as is not felt when the coldness and cares of the world steal around our hearts. George Williams was a manly boy. He was always known among his classmates as above everything mean or low; despising such things for their own sake, and seeking to be known and loved as a boy of honor. We studied many of our lessons together, and both being fond of the Latin and Greek, we found mutual, and often intense delight in detecting and admiring the beauties which these classics unfolded to our young eyes. But this was not the true secret of our attachment.

We were both away from home, at college, neither of us yet seventeen years old, when we simultaneously set out to seek the Saviour. Often did we meet, and kneeling down by the same chair, we poured out our hearts in prayer; and many were the vows we made together that if God should pardon our sins, we would consecrate ourselves forever to his service, and live to his glory. Those hours of deep distress, when we seemed to be cast off of God, and we had not our parents near us to whom we could go with our load of grief, those hours drew us closely to each other's hearts. There we could unburthen our souls, compare our emotions, pray for one another, and thus gather encouragement to persevere in seeking eternal life through Christ. We found peace very nearly at the same time, and in all the ardor

of new love we devoted our whole souls to God. It seemed as if this were the very beginning of our attachment, — so new, so deep, so joyous were the emotions that swelled our hearts when we entered the way to heaven, and together sought and found those pleasures which ripen only under the sunlight of the Divine eye.

A few months after this, and while we were yet in the ardor of new converts' love, we returned to our respective homes to spend a vacation of four weeks. One morning I was walking out with a friend about sunrise, and as we were passing along the street he left me for a moment to speak to a gentleman whom he recognized, and who was travelling by. The young man returned to me, and we resumed our walk. In the course of a few moments he observed casually that the gentleman with whom he had just been conversing mentioned to him a very sudden death in the neighboring town the day before. He said that a young man had been cut down after a few hours' sickness. I asked if he mentioned his name. "Yes," he said, "*his name was* GEORGE WILLIAMS." Had a spear pierced my heart, the poignancy of the pain had scarcely been more acute. Rather, had a bolt from heaven fallen on my head, I could not have been more stupefied. For a moment I reeled, like a drunken man, and then partially recovering strength, I put my ear close to the mouth of my friend, and asked him to tell me what he had said, and *to speak loud*, for I was not sure that I had heard him aright. He begged me to be calm, and refused to repeat the fact. I sat down on the grass, and in the silence of a desolated heart waited for the storm of passionate grief to pass by.

More than fifty years have crept by since that morning, and yet I feel this moment something of the smothering sensations of that hour. The sun was just climbing in the east; but it was dark, very dark; and the whole face of nature, a moment before smiling in the charm of a summer morning, was hung with black. I went home, and rushed to my parents' chamber, and throwing myself across their feet as they lay in bed, I sobbed out (tears then first coming to my relief), "*George Williams is dead!*" In an instant they comprehended the power of my grief, and rising from the pillows, threw their arms around me, and we all wept together, — I for my Jonathan whom I had lost, and they in sympathy with me and the parents who had lost *their* boy. In the course of the day I went up to the funeral, and stood petrified with sorrow over the remains of my dearest friend. He was buried. Night after night he came to me in my dreams, sometimes as in the days of our youthful love, and there was nothing to remind me that he was not as in days that were past; and again he would come to me all clothed in white, an angel from the skies, and would beckon me to follow him; and touching the strings of a little harp of gold that he held in his hand, as the gentle music fell like the light of heaven on my ravished ear, he would spread his wings and vanish into thin air. Often after such meetings and partings I waked and found my pillow drenched in tears. This was my first grief. It is easy to see that my mind was quite unprepared for such a blow, and that the loss even of *such* a friend *now* might be borne with more composure. There was no manliness in that sorrow. But it was good for me. Oh, how vain the world seemed to me from that date! It was an epoch in

my life. I felt that everything my heart was set on here was so uncertain that I would live for God and heaven. And then, in my folly, I thought I would never love anybody again, for fear they, too, would die. How soon I got over that, it is needless to write. This tale of boyish love and sorrow will be read with various emotions according to the tastes of those who read. Some few will understand when I say that it severed the cords that bound me to earthly love, and led me to consecrate every faculty to the service of the Redeemer.

## ECCENTRIC CHARACTERS.

FISHING BILLY. — SALEM JAIL. — DR. BETHUNE. — JOHN  
DUNIHUE.

IN almost every country town there might be found one man at least, and sometimes several, who take the world so easily that they never give themselves any trouble as to what they and their family shall eat or drink. This indifference they carry to such an extent that they use no means to provide for their daily wants. Now where a simple-hearted trust in Providence is followed up by diligent industry, we are always pleased to see it, but in the case of Fishing Billy, the carelessness about this world did not appear to be so much the result of trust in Providence as of such a passion for *fishing* that for the sake of it he neglected everything else, and lost his property while he caught trout. He inherited a handsome farm and a beautiful house, and around him bloomed one of the loveliest families in all our town. His wife was a sweet woman, his daughters were very pretty, and he had a fine boy of my own age; and with such a family one would think that he had motive enough for diligence in business to keep them in respectable circumstances, if he had no desire to add to his possessions. But Billy was one of those good, easy souls, who think that everything will take care of itself, and there is no need of his taking trouble about

it. He took to fishing; and though fond of the water, he drank but very little of it unless it was mixed with something stronger. Yet he never drank to excess, according to the pattern of those days. He was a sober man, and everybody liked him. He would go far and stay long to do any one a good turn; and if he heard of any one being sick to whom a nice trout would be a delicacy, Fishing Billy, as he was universally called, was sure to hear of it and supply the article, — with such readiness, too, that it was plain he found more pleasure in giving than receiving. I can see him now, creeping stealthily down the beautiful brook that meandered through the meadows near my father's house, with his fish-basket hanging at his back, a smashed hat on his head, and a trim pole on his hand; pursuing his prey with an earnest but quiet enthusiasm that Izaak Walton may have attained, and with a skill in the use of *the fly* that the old master of the piscatory art would have envied had he followed him, as I have many a livelong day, to see the speckled, beautiful trout leap from the swift stream and catch its barbed hook as if they were glad to fall into the hands of Fishing Billy. He took to me, and I took to him, and we both took to fishing; and if I could have had my own way about it, I should, in all probability, have given up my time to it and been a fisherman, but my good parents had sense enough to order otherwise, and I was saved from floating down stream with my lazy friend. Fishing Billy was a man of property, and in his way very religious. When he came into possession of a handsome house and farm of his own, he said he thanked God for it; and when he let his fields lie untilled, or his crops waste for want of attention, and one year after another his possessions



slipped away from him by his inattention, and he was at last compelled to see his fair acres passing out of his hands, while he sought a home for his family in a little dwelling that a few years before they would never have dreamed of occupying, even then did this easy soul lift up his eyes to heaven and say, "Blessed be nothing." And, verily, that was about all he had. He finally tried to turn his fishing to some account in the way of supporting his family, and by driving a little business in the line of fishing-tackle, he did contrive to earn a trifle. But that was all; he would often go off for weeks together on fishing excursions, managing perhaps to support himself while he was gone by his favorite pursuit, but leaving his family to look out for themselves. So he lived, and so he died. This friend of my boyhood was often in trouble on account of debts; and in those days if a man did not pay his debts he was liable to be sent to jail. But he would be allowed the limits, which included an area of a mile in every direction from the prison. When Billy was thus detained by his creditors, it was his custom to take his fishing-tackle with him and to whip the streams within the limits.

The jail was in the village of Salem. In that village was an academy of which Mr. Williams, of whose son George I have written, was the principal. George W. Bethune, afterwards the accomplished and eloquent divine, was a pupil in this Salem Academy, twelve miles north of Cambridge. He fell in with Billy, who gave him lessons in the science and art of angling, as they followed the meadow streams in Salem. And so it came to pass that Billy was Dr. Bethune's piscatory tutor while in jail, and mine when he was out. I got over my early passion for fishing. Dr. Bethune never recovered.

His library of books on this subject, and his own works, now classic, are proof of the enduring nature of his first love.

A few months before Dr. Bethune went away to die in Italy I asked him how he came to be so fond of fishing, — for I knew he spent his vacation annually with his rod in hand among the streams of the North. He told me this story of his early association with Fishing Billy. I told Dr. Bethune of my own early experiences, and we followed out the coincidences with great interest.

John Dunihue was another character in Cambridge. He ran through a handsome property, and became partially insane by the use of intoxicating liquors. He was not a beastly drunkard, but being fond of the tavern, he neglected his farm, and his property gradually slipped away from him, till he finally became a crazy vagabond, roaming over the country. In the days of his prosperity, when the fatal habit was gradually fastening itself upon him, he was an attendant upon church at the Old White Meeting-house, and a great friend of my father. But he would often display his eccentricities in the church, to the amusement of the young, and the discomfort of the old. One Sabbath afternoon a young man was to preach, and as he rose to commence his sermon, Dunihue rose in one of the gallery pews and leaned forward. He was a tall, fine looking, white-haired old man, and clapping his hand up to his ear, reached his head out toward the preacher. My father, sitting in the pulpit, said: "Mr. Dunihue, will you please to sit down?" He replied instantly: "I am a little hard of hearing, and I want to hear the text." My father repeated the request and received the same answer. By this time the boys were in a general titter,

and the whole congregation excited. My father spoke with his tremendous voice, and said, "Mr. Dunihue, SIT DOWN!" The old man turned around, and taking his hat, marched out of the pew toward the door, and just before leaving, turned to the pulpit, and shaking his fist at my father, exclaimed: "I don't care a —— for you, or any of your journeymen soul-savers either!" and so saying, left the house. When he came to himself he was mortified by the recollection of his conduct, and sent a load of wood to my father as a present, and an apology. The profanity was horrible, but I never before or since heard a young divine called by the name which this crazy man suddenly invented. I do not know where or when he died. Before we left Cambridge he became almost a beggar, and would be absent from the place weeks and months at a time. He made very long journeys, on foot for the most part, sometimes (as I have been told) taking a seat in a stage-coach unknown to the driver, just as it was starting, and riding a few miles, until discovered, and then by his wit succeeding in getting his ride extended, or if not, taking to his feet.

Years afterwards, when I was pastor at Ballston Spa, he met me in the main street of the village, recognized me at once, and taking off his hat, fell on his knees at my feet, and with great feeling, said, "I wish to pay my respects to the son of my venerable friend."

These recollections of my childhood are not given with any regard to dates, and I have no means of arranging them accurately. They will be jotted down just as they recur to mind, even in the records of later years.

## PREPARING FOR COLLEGE.

PREACHING AND TEACHING.—THE PINE FOREST.—EARLY  
ASPIRATIONS.—MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT.

AS I related in an early letter of this series, when I became eight years of age my father asked my older brother and myself if we would like to study Latin. We both expressed a desire to do so, and being furnished with a grammar we began at once, learning a lesson at night and morning, while we still pursued our usual studies at school. This cut us off from much of our time for fishing and play, but when winter evenings came we had more leisure, and we kept steadily on. I think that my father never appreciated the importance of regular and abundant physical exercise for his children. We were fond of playing ball and all sorts of athletic games, in which he freely joined us, but I have no recollections of his ever speaking to us of the need of it for our health, and I know that he required of us so much study that my mind was never at rest night or day. This was a wretched beginning, and the ill effects of it are now daily suffered. After we had studied Latin in this way out of school, we began to go to the academy and to devote our whole time to classical books. My father was now the Principal of the academy of Cambridge, and this fact makes it necessary to say

something of the reasons that brought him from the pulpit to the school-room. He had around him a large family of sons and daughters. Being a man of finished classical education, and the son of an accomplished scholar, it was his ardent desire to give a thorough education to all his children. His salary as a pastor was never more than six hundred dollars a year, and this was paid partly in money, and partly in wood, butter, oats, hay, etc., — food for man and beast. Out of this he had to pay house rent, and clothe and feed his family. But the pulpit was his place, and he loved to preach. At this time, when his mind was greatly perplexed as to the future of his children, there arose a dissension in the church that made his situation uncomfortable, and it seemed as if Providence had so arranged matters for him that he should be invited to take charge of the academy when it was less inviting for him in his congregation. The two things worked together to make it desirable for him to resign the pulpit and enter the school. In this calling he was eminently successful and greatly useful. To his two daughters he gave as complete and finished educations as the best schools and teachers could give; and to his five sons he gave thorough collegiate educations, — two at Williams College, two at Union, and one at Princeton. One of these died while a member of Union College, but all the rest studied professions; one became a physician, two clergymen, and one a lawyer. My father lived to see them all settled in life and successful in their several callings.

He was a thorough scholar and teacher. Accurate in the minutest niceties of the Latin and Greek, he insisted on the most thorough apprehension by the student of the why and wherefore of everything; making

the prosody especially a severe yet attractive study, and leaving no root of any word without digging it out. He infused his own enthusiastic admiration of the languages into the minds of his pupils, and classical study in his school was a passion, a pride and pleasure, pursued for its own sake, with ardor rarely found among the young in the early stages of education.

In the neighborhood of the house we lived in was, and still is, a forest of pines, a dense grove of stately, solemn trees, in which we children were often wandering to pick wintergreen berries, to chase squirrels, and to enjoy the dense, cool shades. In this grove I loved to sit and muse. In childhood the sighing of the wind through the pines had a subduing power; and this was long before I read the words of the poet Coleridge —

“Ye pine groves, with your soft, and soul-like sound.”

Here I had turns of thought, — when I longed to be a man, that I might be and do something; what, I did not distinctly see, though I never knew the time after coming to a reflective period of life when I did not intend to be a minister of the gospel. In the retirement of a deeply secluded parish, and in the years of early childhood when my mind ought to have been on my books or play, I was studying the map of the future, and laying out work for manhood and age. My longings were intense to be a man. It seemed as if boys were of no account, could be and do nothing, and I must wear the bonds of a long and idle apprenticeship until I could take a place among men. This irksome feeling was doubtless produced by frequent intercourse with ministers visiting at my father's house, whose conversation I

eagerly listened to, longing and begging to be allowed to sit up later than the usual bedtime, to devour every word they said, though they rarely conversed on anything besides the great events of the day, or more frequently on theological topics in which a child might be supposed to take no interest. From 1812, the year of my birth, to 1826, when I went to college, were eventful years in American and European history. Our war with Great Britain, peace, and its fruits; Waterloo, peace, and its fruits in Europe, — all of these were the *current* events of those years of the world.

Before I was twelve years old I was fitted for college, and the class in the academy in which I was studying entered. My father very wisely judged that I was too young, and withheld me, though he was then a trustee of Middlebury College, and my cousin, James B. Jermain, with whom I had pursued the same studies, entered the freshman class at that time. I went to Commencement with him when he entered. We stayed at the President's, Dr. Bates, and I became greatly excited with the idea of college, and the life of a scholar. But my years were too few for a beginning in that career, and we came back to Cambridge. I resumed my course of study at the academy, with higher and more definite aims than I had ever had. Hitherto I had scarcely formed a purpose that had a distinct shape beyond the general idea of "being a minister," which I was in the habit of giving as the answer to the question that every stranger coming to our house was wont to ask me, "What are you going to be?" But at the College Commencement I saw the distinguished men on the stage, and at the President's house. They spoke to me and some of them charged me to study and live to be a

learned and useful man. My ambition was fired by this visit more than by any event of my previous life. I felt it long afterwards, though I never had occasion to speak of it, for the feelings it awakened were only to be cherished and pondered in the heart.



## XXXII.

### THE FARM AND FARMER.

THE PARSONAGE FARM. — ANNUAL VISITS. — CODFISH-BALLS. — ELDER WARNER. — SCHOOL EXAMINED.

THE year after our visit to Middlebury, the congregation to which my father was still preaching bought a parsonage-house and about ten acres of land, and we “moved” from the home of our infancy to the new place. The land required labor. We boys were old enough to work, and work we did. We had previously been accustomed to the care of the horse, but now we went into the field and worked hard, making hay, planting and hoeing corn, and doing anything and everything, though on a limited scale, that belonged to a very small farm. Perhaps this was good for the health, but it went against the grain, and brought very little grain or good of any kind. It was very irksome, and my younger brother Edward and I sometimes talked of running away to get rid of work, and give all our time to study. Such foolish plans would fill our heads when we could not have our own way. Yet the year or two that we spent in that life of labor and study, for the two alternated, was perhaps as useful as any other period. I have often had occasion to make practical use of what I learned in the field and the barn, and I should not have learned it at all but for the experience of those months of toil on the parsonage-farm.

Nearly all the men of my father's congregation, as I have already said, were farmers, and we were in the habit of visiting them frequently. At some of their houses we were expected to make an annual visit. Thus we always went to Joseph Stewart's when chestnuts were ripe, and had a grand time getting a supply for winter. In the same way we went to Seymour King's in cherry time. These visits were great events, and they had the good effect of bringing us into close acquaintance with the life of farming-people, and making us familiar, too, with the way to go up and down trees, in which we became exceedingly expert. Old Uncle Daniel Wells was a great friend of mine, and I was in the habit of spending a week or two at his house every winter. The old gentleman had been a Revolutionary soldier, and was now a farmer with a large family around him, all of whom made a pet of me. The old man told me the same stories every winter, forgetting that he had told them to me before, but I laughed in the same spots, and just as heartily one year as another. In these visits I saw a great deal of farming-life, and in all my future experience in city or country, at home or in foreign lands, the benefit of that intercourse with the farmers of old Cambridge has been felt and valued.

In childhood I became disgusted, I do not know how or why, with salt codfish, so that I never ate it in any shape or form. While all the other children were fond of it, and we usually had it once a week, I would eat bread and butter for my dinner rather than take this dish. Only twice in my life have I partaken of it, and to tell the story I have introduced this trivial matter. When in the south of Italy I was hospitably entertained

by a distinguished American resident, the representative of our Government. One morning at breakfast he said to me, "We have a genuine American dish for you this morning; let me give you a codfish-ball." It was too bad to decline under such circumstances, and I ate the ball. A few years afterwards I was invited by the President of the United States to be his guest at the White House. On Sunday morning at breakfast he said to me, "We have a national dish this morning; let me give you a codfish-ball." Again with a firm face I submitted to my fate, and accepted the situation.

Elder Warner was a favorite with us children. At a singing-school, attended by a hundred people, mostly the young, we had to choose a chorister. The chief singer was a blacksmith, who usually led in church, and who supposed, as did the school, that he would, as a matter of course, be elected. The vote was taken by calling on each person to name the person he voted for. The first six or eight voted "Alpheus Rice," the blacksmith. It came to my younger brother Edward to vote, and he said in a low tone, "Mr. Warner." "Who?" inquired the clerk. "Kirtland Warner," the boy cried out. And the next one said "Kirtland Warner," and the next, and it went through the school with a rush, and a man whom no one had thought of for a chorister was triumphantly chosen. He was a fair singer and made a good leader.

When I was not more than a dozen years old I had an argument with this good elder on the doctrine of election, as taught in the Calvinistic books. He said it was clearly taught in the Bible, but he did not pretend to understand all the deep things of God. It was enough to know that man is perfectly free in his will to

do or not do, while it is also true that God has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass. I said to him, in the words of a child, something like this: "There is no past or future with God; it is now with him always. He sees the future of our lives just as if our history were all written out, or acted out before him; and so of the whole world, earth, heaven, and hell. Eternity is now present with him. When he speaks of decrees, or foreordination, or predestination he employs words to meet our conceptions of the future, but not his own, for there is no future with God. This makes it easy to understand how the creature is perfectly free to do, or not to do, as he chooses, while in the presence of God his conduct, its consequences, and even its eternal issues are all not only fixed, but absolutely present as a thing done in the sight."

The table near which he was sitting and I was standing when making the argument is as distinctly before my mind this moment as if the scene had transpired but a year ago. The old man seemed to be lost in a sort of maze when I finished. Perhaps he thought it was childish nonsense, but I thought he was pleased with the manner in which I had reasoned the matter, for after a little he spoke very kindly to me, and said it was clearer to him than it used to be.

It was not unusual for me at that age, and even previously, to mingle in things that would now be regarded "too high" for children, and when they are recalled the circumstances seem strange, though they were regarded as a matter of course at that time.

## XXXIII.

### GOING TO COLLEGE.

MY MOTHER'S PRAYERS. — THE ELDER'S HORSES. — THE  
DISSENTING ENGLISHMAN. — HOMESICK VIEWS. — MARK  
HOPKINS'S ORATION — IMMATURE EFFORTS.

AFTER his resignation as pastor of the church in Cambridge, my father continued to fill the pulpit every Sabbath and to teach the academy through the week, until he was finally, at his own request, released from his pastoral relations Feb. 27, 1828.

Although his school was large, the price of tuition was so very low that the income was small, and it was impracticable for my parents with a large family to do much more than to make both ends of the year meet. My oldest sister was sent to a boarding-school at Troy, one of the best and most expensive, and this required rigid economy. My brother and I went on with our studies in the academy until in the summer of 1826 we went to Williamstown, Mass., to be examined for admission to the college. My father had determined to send us there instead of to Middlebury, as it was only twenty-six miles from home, and the expenses of traveling back and forth for two of us would be much less. He resigned his trusteeship at Middlebury and was immediately elected trustee of Williams. I was very small of my age, and not yet quite fourteen when I entered. At Commencement every one with whom I became acquainted asked me my age, and nearly all

added their apprehension that I was too young to go to college. I thought so, too, and think so now more decidedly than I did then. But the time had come. After my brother and I had been admitted we returned home to pass the vacation. In the fall, when the time came for us to begin our new life at Williamstown, my father was absent at Synod. He had made arrangements with Elder Kirtland Warner to take us down in his wagon. My mother fitted us out, and it was quite like "moving," for we had to take our own bed and bedding, tables, chairs, etc., and this furniture made quite a formidable load. My mother went through with this business as quietly as if she were doing it all for the children of other people. But it was easy to see that her heart was full. She always prayed with us when father was gone, and her prayers moved me deeply. Now she prayed earnestly and tenderly, and the quiver of the lip at breakfast broke us all down. I could eat nothing, but I made a strong resolution never to do anything to grieve that loving heart. Through life the approbation of my parents has been one of the highest incentives to energetic effort. Next to the love of God I think I have prized it above all other rewards of diligence and success.

The Elder carried us to college in his farm-wagon with two horses, which were painfully dull. The day was warm. We were sad at leaving home, little disposed to talk, and quite regardless of the beauty of the Hoosic Valley, through which our road lay. But every few minutes the Elder would call out to his horses, "Git up, ye lazy hounds," and so often in the course of the long day did he repeat it that we kept it for a "call" for many years afterward.

Williamstown is in the extreme northwestern corner of Massachusetts, and the town of Hoosic, in the State of New York, joins Pownal in Vermont, through which we pass into Williamstown, so that we rode in three States, New York, Vermont and Massachusetts, to go twenty-six miles to college from Cambridge. And for three years we drove over the same road six times every year. But the road never seemed so long or dreary as it did on this day with the Elder and his old horses.

In the West College, on the fourth story, northeast-corner room, we were placed. Dr. Griffin, the President, had at my father's request found a gentleman of some years and excellent character to receive my brother and me as his room-mates. He was an Englishman, studying for the ministry, and an earnest opponent of Episcopacy, especially of the Church of England. Being several years older than I, he was able to give me much useful information, and I became exceedingly fond of listening to his statements respecting matters and things in England, and church matters especially. Not long after he left college he became a minister, and soon an Episcopal minister! He went to England and then returned to this country, where he was a useful, respected, and excellent rector in the church which he taught me to think was too worldly for a Christian and too despotic for a freeman. My views underwent a great change when I came to see for myself, but I have always considered it one of the curious phases of human nature that this good man, devout, conscientious, and intelligent, should spend so much time as he did in teaching me the evils of a system which he soon afterward embraced and loved to his dying day.

Our room in college looked out on the mountains that stand round-about the village as they do around the city of Jerusalem. In the west there is an opening to afford an outlet for the Green River and the Hoosic, that have formed a junction in the valley. After the sun has set to us in the vale, the region beyond that opening is filled with a golden sea of glory, as if the gate of heaven were there and open. My home, old Cambridge, my parents, sisters, and brothers were just beyond that illuminated spot. Day after day, a poor, homesick boy — and a more homesick boy scarce ever was — I used to lie at evening in the window-seat, or on my bed close by it, and look out through that opening toward home, and the brightness that filled it was to me an emblem of the home I longed for, and the darkness settling around me was like that in my sore heart.

We entered the Sophomore class. Our examination had been very thorough; it was conducted by Mr. Tutor Hopkins, afterward Mark Hopkins, D.D., the distinguished President of the same college. At the Commencement when we entered (1826) Mr. Hopkins delivered his Master's oration; his subject was "Mystery." As I was then not quite fourteen years old, and hearing it in the midst of a crowd, when it required the closest attention of a mature mind to follow and comprehend its scope, it is not to be expected that I would be greatly interested in it. But it seemed to me a *wonder*, a mighty exhibition of intellectual power, something so new to me that I did not know men could "write and speak so." Afterward it was published in "Silliman's Journal of Science," and I read it, but it did not read as it sounded when I heard it from the stage.

On that same day Nicholas Murray, afterward my



friend "Kirwan" of the famous series of letters, was graduated and delivered an oration. When we met fifteen years afterward I supposed it was the first time, till we compared notes and found that he left Williams College the day on which I entered.

My brother and I were well up in the Latin and Greek languages, and were prepared to hold our own very easily in the class. The study of the classics has been a hereditary passion in the family. My son, Wendell Prime, reads the same copy of Leusden's Greek Testament (*Amstelædami*, 1740, 12°) that his father read, his grandfather, his great-grandfather, and his great-great-grandfather. Five successive generations have had the identical book. It has been rebound, but the text is clear and well-preserved. When Mr. Allibone was preparing his "Dictionary of Authors" he wrote to me for facts respecting my grandfather, and when I related to him this history of the Greek Testament, he replied that it was an extraordinary incident of hereditary literature, and asked me to send him the title-page of the book, which I did.

I was the youngest student in the class and the youngest in college, though I entered the Sophomore year. Being very small, I appeared younger even than I was. But I was too young to be profited by the course as those were whose minds were more mature. In mathematics it was out of the question for a boy of fourteen to keep pace with men of eighteen and twenty. It would have been better for me all through college and life after, if I had worked on that little parsonage farm for a few years more, before entering the lists with those more advanced. In nothing was I more deficient than in the power of expressing myself on paper. To

write a decent composition was with me an impossibility. I had been required to write at school and at home, but when my puerile productions came into comparison with the essays of older and better disciplined men, I was so ashamed that I could scarcely dare to write at all.

If I have since succeeded in being useful with my pen in the press, my early years and first attempts gave no signs of any success.

## XXXIV.

### THE COLLEGE REVIVAL.

THE PRESIDENT'S INVITATION.—THE SOCIAL MEETING.—  
DR. GRIFFIN'S SERMONS.—VAIN REPETITION.

DURING the first winter of my college life at Williamstown there was greatly increased attention to religion. So far as I know, the beginning of it was as follows: Rev. Dr. Griffin, the President, invited several of the students who had the last fall entered college to come to his study. As we were together in the course of the day, we learned of one another's invitation, and were quite uneasy to learn the occasion of it. Had we been suspected of any wrong? Were we to be examined in reference to any breach of law? At eight in the evening we were gathered, twelve or fourteen of us, in the President's study. He received us with great urbanity and fatherly kindness. The Doctor was a splendid man in person, more than six feet high, with a massive frame and most imposing form. He was punctilious to a fault in the forms of politeness, and he inculcated a regard to *manners* that is rarely enforced in schools of learning. If he were approaching the college, and a student was about to enter the door, the Doctor would call to him and require him to step aside, and wait until he, the President, had entered. These lessons were good, though they were laughed at.

When we were all assembled he arranged us in a semicircle around his study, and took his seat in the centre. "Young gentlemen," he began, "I have invited you to come and see me this evening, because I am personally acquainted with the parents of all of you, and they are all my dear friends. Because I love them I love you, and desire your highest good." This kind allusion to our parents, won the heart of every boy in the room. The Doctor then went on to talk with us of the dangers, temptations and trials of our college life, and to commend religion as the great source of strength and safety, as well as of peace and pleasure. Beginning with the student nearest his right hand, he inquired of each one as to his own feelings on the subject, and he put the questions in a form so general that we could answer them without embarrassment in the presence of one another. This was followed by an appeal so tender, so persuasive, so parental, that we wept with him, for he was given to tears, and then we knelt around him while he prayed earnestly, lovingly, and eloquently for us and our parents, till we were all melted together.

When we returned to college, several of the young men were in my room, and we *agreed* that we would all be glad to attend to the subject of religion if there should be a general attention, and the thing should become popular. And it did. A short time afterward a man fell down dead on the college walk, while going home from church. He was a healthy farmer in the neighborhood. The suddenness of the event produced a startling and serious effect on the college. Dr. Griffin made powerful use of it in the chapel, impressing it on the minds of the students. The pious students of the Senior and Junior classes visited from room to

room, conversing with all who were willing to hear them. Hoisington and Hutchings, who afterward went to India as missionaries, often spoke to me, and so did others. Dr. Griffin appointed meetings for conversation with those interested, and these were attended by large numbers. The regular recitations were sometimes suspended, and the time employed in religious conversation and in prayer. The preaching of the President was at this time surpassingly eloquent. He has often been called the Prince of Preachers. This is not due to him. He was too artificial to be the most eloquent. His sermons were written and rewritten, and revised and modified, the sentences framed with art and such rhetorical balance that every word had its own place. His tones of voice and his gestures were all of the rules of the school, and while he was one of the most effective preachers, probably the most eloquent preacher I ever heard, I think he would have been more effective had he been more natural. One Sabbath he was presenting the perilous condition of the impenitent sinner. Throwing out his arm and his open hand beyond the pulpit he said: "There he lies on the palm of the hand of an angry God who has but to turn that hand and he slides into eternal ruin." As he said this he turned up his hand, and I moved along on the seat involuntarily to get away from the spot where I seemed to myself to be represented by the preacher.

One evening during the revival, I called on Dr. Griffin, for my heart was full, and I longed for Christian counsel. I was received with characteristic courtesy and dignity, but as soon as I had named my errand, Dr. Griffin arose, walked to the staircase, and speaking in an earnest tone to his wife, said, "My dear, Prime sec-

ond is anxious about the salvation of his soul, pray for him." He returned to the room where I was sitting, talked and prayed with me, and I shall never forget that evening in Dr. Griffin's study. I heard him preach all the most celebrated discourses which have been published since his death, and remember all the splendid passages and the manner in which he rendered them. When the volumes were published, I was a pastor, and I determined to give my people the great privilege and pleasure of hearing these magnificent discourses. Accordingly, I appointed one evening in a week for a meeting to hear them, advertising that the sermons were the most eloquent they had ever heard or read. The people came, and I read one of the sermons. It fell cold and dead on the audience. I did not repeat the experiment. The thunder and lightning of the living author's eloquence were not put into the book. But he was a magnificent preacher, a great orator, a man to make a life-lasting impression on any one who heard him.

## AN UNBELIEVING CLASSMATE.

EVIL INFLUENCES. — PROMISING ABILITIES. — THE MISSIONARY OF MT. LEBANON. — THE ARAB SCHOOL. — A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

I N my Junior year our class received some accessions, and among them was Simeon Howard Calhoun. He was older than almost any other of the class, and a man of remarkable character, genius, and attainments. He came from Canajoharie, in the State of New York; had been a teacher and editor, and active politician. With remarkable conversational powers, wonderful facility of winning the affection and confidence of the young, with a magnetic influence that drew them to him and held them fast, he speedily became the centre of a charmed circle. Wit, frivolity, literature, pleasure, the brightest enjoyments of social life were to be had in his room, which soon became the rendezvous of a gay, wild, wicked set of young men. At this time there were in the lower classes of college some of the wickedest youth whom I ever knew, taking all subsequent opportunities of seeing sin into the statement. Our college had obtained a wide repute for being a *revival* college. Parents who had profligate sons sent them here in the hope that they might come under the power of divine grace and be saved. It goes like a knife to my heart to write that I fell into this circle, in my admiration of

Calhoun. He petted me. I was often sitting on his lap. I was delighted with the entertaining conversation that was always going on in his company. But I heard wicked expressions that now chill my blood and which I would gladly forget forever. Calhoun did not use profane or vulgar language in my hearing. But he encouraged grossly wicked conversation, and the whole influence of his association with me was deleterious, destructive of religious life, and suggestive of infidelity. At one time he professed to be deeply serious, but it afterwards proved to be a mere pretence of his to draw the professors of religion into conversation with him that he might afterward make sport of them. His influence became pervading, so that he was a power in the college, feared by some, abhorred by others, admired by many, and loved by a few. I was among the latter for many months. In the course of our Senior year his influence was abated in consequence of his being charged with some delinquency in a literary society, for which he was publicly censured, and he left college for a little while, but returned and soon resumed his sway over the circle of his loyal friends. Calhoun had been an active politician, and in college was a zealous Jackson Democrat. In the Philotechnian Society, of which he was a member, he advocated the election of Gen. Andrew Jackson to the presidency, and distinguished himself by the great ability of his argument and the extent of his knowledge in civil affairs. It was natural to expect him to enter into political life, and we who admired his talents and learning had unbounded confidence in his future distinction. We talked familiarly of him as one who would very likely be president of the United States. He graduated with us in 1829, and



went to Springfield, Mass., where his brother resided, who was President of the Senate in that State, and there Calhoun began to study law. Again I met him at the foot of Mount Lebanon, in Syria, in 1854. He took me to his house on the mountain. It was a little wooden cot, such as the very poorest of our people at home would live in, and surrounded by the huts of a semi-civilized people of various races, whom he was seeking to instruct in the truths of the gospel! Here was my college classmate, once a leader in the armies of the wicked, a bold and crafty enemy of religion, now a humble, self-denying missionary, — all his ambition, learning, talents, prospects, hopes and purposes laid at the foot of the cross. Here he had a school of boys, Arabs, whom he was educating for usefulness among their own people. I went with him into the schoolroom and listened to their recitations, Calhoun interpreting their answers. When I was satisfied, he allowed them to ask me questions. It was curious to observe their interest in what was going on in America. They were encouraged to make themselves familiar, through the newspapers translated to them, with the progress of things in all parts of the world. But the matter that had chiefly excited their curiosity recently was the report that a man had walked on a wall with his head hanging down toward the floor. They asked me if it was true, and when I told them I had seen it done, their interest was intense. Then I lay down on my back along one of the benches, and putting up my feet toward the ceiling-wall, explained to them the process while their teacher interpreted my remarks.

Here, in this obscure, uninviting, isolated spot, among these poor, ignorant people, my friend was happy.

True, he had a charming wife and two sweet children, and both he and she were formed and fitted to adorn any society in any land, yet they were contented to live and labor and die in this mountain.

A few days afterwards we were riding on horseback across the Plain of Sharon, and I asked Calhoun to tell me what it was that arrested him in his course of unbelief, and induced him to begin a religious life. To my surprise he said it was the death of his mother! He then told me that when he heard of the event, he was as careless of religious things and as bitterly opposed to them as he had ever been; but with the news of his mother's death came up the recollection of her counsels, her holy life, and her tender love and prayers, and then he was led to reflection, to penitence, and a change of purpose for the future. What the eloquence of the "Prince of Preachers" could not do, the memory of a mother did. He was brought to a holy resolution to devote himself to the service of God. He was afterward tutor in college, and then becoming a preacher, he offered his services to the American Board of Foreign Missions, and by them was sent to Syria. His life has been commemorated as that of one of the most useful, consistent, devoted missionaries in any part of the world.

## COLLEGE INCIDENTS.

MY CONVERSION. — A SOLEMN MOMENT. — A PRAYER ASSOCIATION. — THE INCENDIARY. — LOWELL SMITH. — EXAMINATION AND GRADUATION. — A FATHER'S DRILLING.

**D**URING the revival I have mentioned Dr. Griffin was very much engaged in public and private labor for its promotion. His house was always open for the students to come to him for counsel. In my last letter I mentioned the incident of my own visit to his study, and repeat it here more in detail. I had been in great anxiety of mind for two weeks or more, and had several times conversed with him; but at last I was led so near to the verge of despair that I felt a deep conviction of the necessity of deciding the question at once, one way or the other. "This night," I thought, "I must find peace, or I will seek it no longer in religion." With such a feeling I went down to the President's house, and found him alone in his study. He received me very kindly, and asked me at once the state of my mind. I told him frankly that I had come to the conclusion that the great question with me must be settled that night. "Stop a moment," said he; and rising up he went to his study door and opened it, stepped across the hall, and opened the door of the parlor in which Mrs. Griffin was sitting, and said in a voice of tender compassion and entreaty that filled me with the deepest

emotions: "My dear, Prime second is here, and tells me that the great question with him must be decided to-night; pray for him, pray for him." Shutting the doors, he returned and sat down by me and resumed the conversation. The effect of this movement was nearly overwhelming. I was a mere child, he a magnificent, venerable man, roused as if the interests of a nation or a world were at stake, and calling on his wife to pray while he returned to aid in the crisis that had arrived. And the result of that interview was my reaching the peaceful assurance that I was a forgiven sinner.

Volatile to an excess of levity, I was also in the midst of companions who had no interest in religion, and I was far from being as serious as a regard to Christian consistency required. Ardent, enthusiastic in the pursuit of any good, I delighted in the service and duties of my new course of life, and sought to win others to the same faith and hope. Five of us formed a little association for daily prayer, and kept it up with regularity. It was very useful to me, and, I think, to the others. The revival did not result in the conversion of many. The most of those who were awakened soon lost all seriousness, and became wilder than before.

About this time the college was startled by the discovery that the building, the West College, in which I roomed, was set on fire in the dead of night. One of the students on the same floor with me, the fourth, having got ready for bed, and extinguished his light, thought he would open his door for a few moments to ventilate his room. Waiting in silence and darkness, he heard some one pass by, in his stockings, and go up the stairs to the garret, and soon return. Suspecting mischief, he ran up the stairs himself, and found a fire

kindled under the roof, which, in a few minutes, would have been beyond control. He extinguished the flames, and went to his room without disturbing any one. The next day he mentioned the facts. The dastardly and infernal character of the deed filled every mind with horror. It was evidently the expectation of the incendiary, by kindling the fire under the roof, that the alarm would be given in season for the students to make escape with their lives; but it is hardly probable that all would have done so had the fire raged long before discovery. An investigation led to the conviction of the incendiary. He was expelled from college, and I have never heard of him since. His name was so peculiar that I would recognize it if I met it in a list of advertised letters or in the Directory.

Having been well prepared in classical studies before coming to college, I had no difficulty in keeping pace with my class in Latin and Greek. Indeed there were many who depended on me to help them with their lessons, and I was glad to avail myself of their aid in mathematics. Lowell Smith, who has been for many years a faithful and successful missionary at the Sandwich Islands, was one to whom I was greatly indebted. We roomed together one year, and our friendship has continued to this day. He has sent me many testimonials of his regard. If I never meet with him on earth, I shall still cherish his memory as long as I live, and I expect to meet him in heaven.

During our vacations in college I was in the habit of giving my father assistance in the academy, of which he was yet the principal. The last term of our Senior year I remained at home for this purpose, but went down to the Senior examination and took my place in

the class, and answered questions in some studies that I had not been able to look at. Happily the committee, some of whom slept profoundly while we were supposed to be reciting, did not censure my delinquencies, and I passed.

In August, 1829, my class was graduated. I delivered the Greek oration, which was then one of the four honors of the class. If general scholarship was the standard of merit, I did not deserve the distinction, for there were several who had higher attainments. But in the Latin and Greek languages I was easily equal to any of them, and this was due to my father's thorough drill more than to my industry or talent. The Greek Revolution had been the theme of universal interest at that time, and I wrote a sketch of Marco Bozzaris for my Commencement oration.

## XXXVII.

### THE YOUNG TEACHER.

MY PUPILS. — SELF-DISCIPLINE. — JUDGE PRATT'S STORY. —  
JUVENILE ADDRESSES. — USEFULNESS AND ENJOYMENT.

**I**N the evening of the Commencement-day on which I was graduated, I set out for home, riding with my cousin, John P. Jermain, in a one-horse wagon. A tremendous storm of rain, with thunder and lightning most fearful, came up, and we remained all night at Hoosic. The next morning we rose early, and reached Cambridge before breakfast. We were in such haste to get home because I was to be at the academy at nine o'clock A. M., to open the school in the absence of my father, who remained at the meeting of the trustees of the College. I had been assisting my father for some time previously, and now, when not yet seventeen years old, was in charge of the school, most of the pupils being as old as myself, and some much older. Too young to study a profession, and not as clearly decided in my mind what to do as I had been in even earlier years, I continued to teach for that year and the next. This was admirable discipline. I learned more than the pupils. Pursuing the system of instruction which my father had inaugurated with great success, I sought to make accurate and thorough scholars, and this required close attention on my part to the niceties of the classical authors which we studied. My youth encouraged the

pupils to watch for errors in my teaching, and this quickened me to careful preparation, and I never have considered it lost time while I was thus employed.

Not long after my graduation, my father was invited to the charge of the Mount Pleasant Academy, at Sing Sing, Westchester county, New York. After visiting the place and becoming thoroughly satisfied that it was desirable for him and his family to make the change, he accepted the invitation, and removed from Cambridge in the spring of 1830. I remained at Cambridge through the summer of that year, and continued the school, my sister Maria also having charge of a young ladies' school in the same building. This was a great responsibility very early laid upon me, and yet I proceeded with the work as a matter of course, and endeavored to be faithful. I do not remember that I had a case of discipline in the course of my administration. Receiving the respectful obedience of the pupils during school hours, and being their companion at other times, I led them quietly along the paths of science, and when we came to the hills we climbed up as well as we could. One of my scholars was a tall young man from Argyle, by the name of Pratt. More than twenty years afterward I met him at Saratoga, and did not recognize him. He spoke to me and recalled those school-days and said his name was Pratt. "Yes," said I, "that may be, but the Pratt who went to school to me was a man of great ability, and was destined to be something in the world; you must tell me who you are and what you are." "Well," he replied, "I am Judge Pratt, judge of the Supreme Court of the State of New York." "Ah, that will do," I said. "You are the man. I knew you were to make your mark." In 1873 he was the Democratic



candidate for the office of Attorney-General in the State of New York. I introduced Judge Pratt to a large circle of my clerical friends who were at the Springs, and the Judge was soon the life of the company. He was overflowing with good stories, of which I now recall but one. He said: "At Syracuse, where I reside, the Millerites had quite a large sect, and as they saw the time of the end drawing nigh, they talked of having all things in common. Those who had nothing of their own to divide with others, were of course quite willing to make this arrangement, and the most of them were of this description. But there was one rich farmer who had joined the company and was looking daily for the coming of the Lord. He was called upon to give up his large and handsome property for the common benefit, and at this he demurred. He would think and pray over it and report at the next meeting. When that came and they were all together in one place, he said that his mind was fully made up as to his duty; while praying over the subject a text of Scripture had been deeply impressed on his mind, and it had made his way perfectly clear: it was this, 'Occupy till I come.' He should do it."

Some of the young men who were then under my care became useful preachers, teachers, lawyers, and distinguished in various ways. I have reason to believe that the mental and moral discipline of that year was quite as profitable to me as in any year of my life as a student. I had suddenly become a man, not in years, nor in wisdom, but in position, responsibility, and duty. In the year 1829 I was called on to deliver the annual address before the Young Men's Bible Society of Cambridge and vicinity. The venerable Dr. Bullions, my

father, and other clergymen were present, and I made an address which is still preserved among my papers, sophomorical in its rhetoric, but earnest in its tone, and full of hope for the future knowledge of the Bible in all the earth. The temperance cause was now in its full tide of success, and I made an address in the White Meeting-house to a large audience. These juvenile efforts were made before I was seventeen years old, and I mention them merely to show that I was panting to have a part in the great drama of life, and was rushing in as soon as any door was open. I sought to fire my pupils with the same enthusiasm in the pursuit of usefulness. Even then I had reached a truth that has been my main-spring of action all the way through this first half-century of life, that *usefulness* is the practical end or object of living. Enjoyment is only by the way. I am also sure that even enjoyment is found more frequently in paths of usefulness than in any others. But if it were not, it should not lessen our usefulness.

## XXXVIII.

### CHOOSING A PROFESSION.

EARLY STRUGGLES. — IMITATING TENNENT. — READING BLACKSTONE. — THE FUTURE GOVERNOR.

IN the autumn of 1830 I joined my parents at Sing Sing, the Academy there being in a flourishing state, and my father wanting my aid. But the time had arrived when it was important that I should decide on a profession. My early intention to be a preacher had given way before a conviction of my moral unfitness for the sacred office. As its purity and dignity rose up before me, I shrank from the holy place, and sought to find some other service to which I was better adapted. I had indeed made a profession of religion, and maintained the character that should become a man who had thus devoted himself to the church; but my temperament was so lively, mercurial, and excitable that I gave way to levity to a degree that was inconsistent with the sobriety of a clerical life. Of this I was more sensible than my friends may have supposed. I struggled against it; wrote serious resolutions and prayed over them; made vows and asked God to help me keep them. Sometimes I succeeded in being very sober outwardly for a few days. But it was as natural for me to make fun as it was to breathe. My father was always fond of telling a good story; and as like begets like, I fell into the habit. For such a person to put on a long face and pretend to be grave was to be a hypocrite.

When the Rev. Gilbert Tennent was a minister at New Brunswick, N. J., a pastor in a town some distance off who had heard of the wonderfully holy man Mr. Tennent, came down to spend a few days in the place and learn of him. Impressed deeply with the power of awful sanctity that he saw in Mr. Tennent, he returned to his parish with a firm resolution to be like that blessed man of God. Spending the close of the week in devout retirement, he went to church on Sabbath morning, greeting those who met him at the door with a solemn air and tone that was all unusual in their genial and cheerful pastor. He conducted the services in the same profoundly serious manner, so serious as to be unnatural unless he were under some peculiar pressure. As he came from the pulpit one of his elders gave him his hand and kindly asked if anything was the matter with him; was he unwell, or his family, or had he heard any evil tidings. To all these inquiries the pastor replied No; and at last the elder, unable to penetrate the mystery, exclaimed, "Well, if nothing is the matter, then the Devil's in you." The good pastor confessed the fact on the spot. He was trying to be like Mr. Tennent, and not himself. He was acting a part, and he resolved to be hereafter himself, and as much better as possible.

Having nearly reached the age of manhood, and having made no progress in the work of self-subjection, I was coming to the conclusion in my own mind that my temperament was quite unfit for a minister of the gospel. Many years afterward a gentleman who attained high distinction in civil life, and was a representative of our Government at a foreign court, told me that he had when a young man turned his thoughts to the Christian

ministry, but abandoned the idea because he felt assured he had not religion enough to enable him to resist the temptations incident to the profession. I had not religion or foresight enough to anticipate such an objection. But I did honestly apprehend that my constitutional levity was such as to make it undesirable for me to assume the duties of a calling whose whole work was in its name and nature so grave and reverend. I did not reach this opinion without great conflict. In the solitude of my chamber and the distress of my heart, I sought the Infinite Spirit to guide me in the matter, and to save me from making a mistake at a point where the issues of life, and perhaps life eternal, were turning. The result of this self-examination and this seeking after the guiding light of heaven was that I went to General Aaron Ward and asked him to lend me the first volume of Blackstone's Commentaries, that I might begin the study of law. He gave it to me, and I began to read it at my intervals of leisure, which, however, were few and short.

The winter passed pleasantly, though full of labors, — teaching before breakfast, all day, and often in the evening, and reading law when all the family were sound asleep. But the *law* did not meet the cravings of my spirit. The depth of my soul was filled with love for a truth that was not taught in Blackstone. My flesh and my heart cried out for the living God. In the next spring and summer we had a remarkable religious awakening in the academy, and in the female seminary of which my sister had charge, and several of the students in both the schools were converted. In this work I was enthusiastic. It revived in me all the "first love" of a young convert, and I began a new life of devotion.

Abandoning the thought of being a lawyer, I returned with new zeal to the pursuit of those studies which should fit me for the work of the ministry. Yet there was little time for the study of anything out of the line of the profession that engrossed my attention night and day. I was a teacher of boys, but panting to be a teacher of men.

Speaking of boys, I am reminded of one who was learning his letters, and who daily stood at my knee and said his lesson. He tried my patience severely as he blundered over his A, B, C. But he mastered them finally, and made commendable progress in his books. I came near hanging him by the neck, and the tragedy is a warning to all who, like myself, are too apt to trifle. One day I directed him to stand up in the middle of the floor, as a correction for some fault. Near him the bell rope came down to the floor, through the ceiling overhead. There was a noose at the end of it, and in playfulness I dropped it over his head, and it rested on his shoulders. Some boys were in the hall above, and in mischief just at that moment commenced pulling the rope up. Instantly it caught the child by the neck. They thought some one had taken hold of the lower end, and drew up all the harder. I seized the rope and drew down, but the child was choking; it was a terrible moment; I feared he was killed, and was less rapid in my success than I would have been had I not been terrified. But I soon extricated the sufferer, and he hardly knew what had happened. He went on with his studies, became a capital speaker at public meetings, studied law, became Recorder of the city of New York, and subsequently Governor of the State of New York, — my life-long friend, John T. Hoffman.

## XXXIX.

### SING SING ON THE HUDSON.

MY USEFUL FRIEND.—A RELIGIOUS WARRIOR.—THE PRISON  
SUNDAY-SCHOOL.—THE FRENCH COMMISSIONERS.—M. DE  
TOCQUEVILLE ON THE HUDSON.

WHEN I arrived at Sing Sing from the north by steamboat, on landing I looked about for some one to take my trunk up the hill. Seeing a man with his horse and cart, I asked him if he would do this. He readily consented, and asked me to ride with him. On the way we fell into conversation, and I was pleased with the frankness and intelligence of the man. Arrived at the door, I asked him "what was to pay," and he said, "Nothing," and drove onward. I mentioned the circumstance in the house, and describing the man, my father exclaimed, "Oh, he's Mr. Watson, a neighbor of ours, a nursery and seeds man." In a few days I met him again, and after a pleasant laugh about the trunk we formed an agreeable acquaintance, which ripened into intimate friendship, which has continued without a moment's interruption to the present. By birth an Englishman, by education a Scotch Presbyterian, he was a loyal and loving citizen. In early life, without the advantages of a liberal or classical education, he had in a memory of extraordinary power treasured the best thoughts of the best authors, having pages of standard poets, philosophy, and theology at his command. So

familiar was he with all the literature of his own country that I never encountered his match in facility of reference and citation. In subsequent years he added to his acquirements a knowledge of the Latin and Greek tongues, the German and French, and yet pursued his daily labors in the field, performing a farmer's day's work every day. Twenty years after I first knew him I was secretary of the American Bible Society; and as he had told me a hundred times, and often with moistened eyes, that he longed for some service that would take him from the soil to immediate contact with the souls of men, I gave him an agency for the circulation of the Scriptures in this city. He steadily, faithfully, and with great usefulness pursued the work for years. The New York Classis of the Reformed Dutch Church gave him license to preach the gospel, though his duties to the Bible Society did not allow him to take a pastoral charge. His friendship and sympathy form a living link with the associations of my early life at Sing Sing.

In the village of Sing Sing was a young man in a drug store, whose name was Perry. He took the Texas fever, went there, and became active in the military movements under Gen. Sam. Houston. When he returned from the South he became religious, and entered the ministry in the Methodist Church. His sympathies were warmly with the South when the Southern rebellion in 1861 broke out, but his loyalty and principle made him a patriot, and he was ardently attached to the government. At a meeting of the Ministers' Conference, a Doctor of Divinity introduced a series of political resolutions to which Mr. Perry objected as out of place in such a meeting. The Doctor said he hoped there were no traitors present, whereupon Mr. Perry rose and very



deliberately said: "If the gentleman means to apply that term to me, I shall feel bound to chastise him on the spot." The Doctor immediately apologized for his hasty remark. Within a few days Mr. Perry raised a regiment of soldiers, was appointed colonel of it, went away to fight the battles of his country, and died in the service.

While we were residing at Sing Sing we became interested in the moral condition of the State Prison at that place. We organized a corps of teachers to go every Sabbath and give instruction to the prisoners, under the general supervision of the chaplain, Rev. Mr. Dickerson. We had six or eight convicts assigned to each teacher, and standing at the door we held up the book to the grated window in it, and taught the prisoners to read. In our first experiment we selected those that were the most ignorant, as the most in need of being taught. I used the first chapter of the Gospel by John as the lesson in which all my prison pupils learned their letters, and then to read. By and by the authorities of the prison consented to bring the men out every Sabbath into the chapel, and we took our seats with them, as in any school, and taught them the Word of God. The work became exceedingly interesting and useful to us, if not to the prisoners.

About this time two French commissioners, MM. Beaumont and De Tocqueville, came to this country to examine the systems of prison discipline, and other institutions, and to make a report to their own government. They visited at our house, and we became deeply interested in these gentlemen, more particularly in M. de Tocqueville, who was the more social, inquiring, and communicative. Having heard of the Sunday-

school in the prison, they requested the privilege of attending it and went with me on Sabbath morning to the prison. M. de Tocqueville spent the hour with me and my class. He took the Bible in his hand and heard one of the convicts repeat two chapters of some forty verses each, without missing or miscalling a single word. The French philosopher was filled with astonishment. He pursued his inquiries till he found that the only time the man could have for study was part of an hour while they were resting at noon, and yet he had mastered all these verses, and such thoughts, too, as the gospel presented to his poor soul! Turning to me, the statesman asked, "Do you not suppose that the instruction here given to these men has much to do with the government of the prison?" When he went back to France, and published a volume on America, he mentioned in it this visit to the prison Sabbath-school, and the recitation he there heard.

One day I spent with these gentlemen walking into the country over the hills east of the village. From the heights now crowned with elegant residences we had a splendid view of the Hudson River, with the Highlands on both sides, and the whole width and sweep from the Haverstraw Bay through Tappan Zee to the city of New York. M. De Tocqueville said, as we sat on a rail fence gazing with admiration on this magnificent view, "We will except the Bay of Naples, out of respect to the opinion of the world, but I never saw a more beautiful scene in nature than this."

Afterward this gentleman became distinguished in the world of mind and letters. He comprehended the genius of our Constitution, as foreigners rarely do, even Englishmen. His works always breathed a spirit of

kindliness toward us, and it has often afforded me a real pleasure to know that when I was but twenty years of age I had the opportunity of several days' converse with so discerning, intelligent, and instructive a man. Of course it would be forgotten by him in a few days, while the impression on my mind was permanent.

## XL.

### EXAMINED BY PRESBYTERY.

CHOLERA IN PRISON.—THE INCORRIGIBLE YOUTH.—EXAMINATIONS BY PRESBYTERY.—RELIGION AND MUSIC.

THE summer of 1832 was made memorable as the first *cholera* season in this country. Upon the news of its having reached Canada a panic seized the people of the United States. A day of fasting and prayer was set apart, and very generally observed. In Sing Sing it would have been hard to find twenty men who would go to church on a week-day, and when we appointed a service for the fast-day it was scarcely expected that there would be a congregation. As my father and I were walking to the church, we lamented that none were on their way with us. We arrived and found the house crowded! The people were all there before us, and the day was devoutly observed. At last the cholera reached the prison, and made terrible havoc among the prisoners. My brother Alanson was then studying medicine with Dr. Hoffman, the physician of the prison. My brother was locked up night after night in the hospital with the convicts that he might be on hand to minister to the sick, many of whom would be attacked in their cells and must then be carried instantly to the hospital for treatment. In one of these dreadful nights a young man was brought in under a

terrible attack. His case at first resisted all human skill, but my brother labored long and hard to save the poor fellow, who at length said to him, "Doctor, do you know me?" He said, "No;" and then the young man told him who he was. He was a Cambridge boy, one of our friends and boyhood companions in the congregation of the Old White Meeting-house. He had left there two or three years before, gone to the city to be a clerk, committed a forgery, and been sent to State prison. My brother carried him through the collapse of the cholera and a typhoid stage that followed it. When he was well we obtained pardon of the Governor, had him up at our house, and did what we could to secure him for the future in the ways of virtue. But he returned to vice and crime, and finally died in prison, I think in New Orleans.

In the autumn of 1832 I was received by the Presbytery of Bedford as a candidate for the ministry. It was necessary for me to present myself to that body for examination before I could come under its care. For this purpose I had to drive to Rye, some fifteen or twenty miles from Sing Sing, where the Presbytery held its autumnal session. As I was riding in a gig through the village of White Plains, I met a regiment of militia, it being the day of "general training." The General in command was the Hon. Aaron Ward, of Sing Sing, a very warm friend of mine, who, seeing me, raised his military hat and made me a graceful salute. I stopped the horse, and, standing up in the gig, returned the salute. The officers of his staff, supposing it to be some "distinguished" friend of the General, made the salute, and the soldiers followed their example, while I stood, feeling very much overwhelmed, but returning the com-

pliment until the entire body, a thousand or more, had marched by. Then I went on to Presbytery.

The next day a committee was appointed to examine the candidates, of whom there was but one besides myself. We retired to a house in the vicinity of the church with the committee who were to satisfy themselves that we were sincere in our desires to serve God in the Christian ministry. My examination was brief, for I had little to say, — nothing, indeed, except that from my childhood it had been my purpose to preach the gospel. At times my heart had been drawn aside to other aims, but had returned again to its early love, and now it was the governing purpose of my life to be useful, and if it pleased God to give me that honor and privilege, it should be spent in preaching the gospel of his dear Son.

My companion in examination said he had very lately got religion, — he was sure of it, for he used to be great for fiving, but when he was converted he gave it right up. Before that time he would rather go without a meal of victuals any time than to lose his fiving; but now he didn't want to fife at all. Though the hour was to me one of great solemnity, I could only with much difficulty maintain a decent gravity while this narrative was given. There sat the grave divines as solemn as if we were at a funeral, and I reproached myself severely for wishing to laugh in such a presence and on such an occasion. I said to myself, "If those men feel as they look, I am not right." Returning to the church, I walked by the Rev. Mr. Remington, one of the committee, and as devout a man as I ever knew. He was of a ghastly pallor, — from some disease of the heart. He was afterwards found dead in his bed. I determined to

probe him and ascertain for my own satisfaction if he verily received that young man's remarks as satisfactory evidence of religious experience. Carelessly I began, "Our young friend seems to have had a remarkable fondness for the use of the fife." That was enough. Mr. Remington left the middle of the road where we were walking, went to the rail fence, and leaning on it, laughed mightily. When he was fully recovered to his normal sobriety, he returned, and we resumed our walk to the church. Presbytery took the young man under their care, but when he came before them again six months afterward, they kindly advised him to abandon the idea of preaching.

I have a friend who is an accomplished teacher of Spanish, French, and music in this city. He was extravagantly fond of playing the violin. Some years ago he was led to seek and find religion in the Methodist Church. Conscientiously he gave up the violin. But he was not a happy Christian. Fortunately he stated his feelings to my father, who knew his former fondness for music, and who soon drew from him the fact that he had laid aside his violin as an amusement incompatible with his profession of religion. My father bade him to fiddle, sing, and pray. He did all, and did them well, and has been a happy Christian for twenty-five years and more.

## XLI.

### STUDYING AT PRINCETON.

REV. MR. NETTLETON. — MY ROOM-MATE. — DR. MILLER. —  
DR. ALEXANDER. — HIS DYING TESTIMONY.

A FEW weeks after this visit to Presbytery, I went to Princeton and entered the Theological Seminary. On my way there I was made acquainted with a young man going to enter the seminary, whose name was Lewis C. Gunn. We agreed to room together. From New York to New Brunswick we went by steamboat, and thence by stage. Among the passengers in the stage was the celebrated Rev. Dr. Nettleton, so greatly honored of God in the promotion of revivals of religion. On the next Sabbath I heard him preach. His preaching, I am told, was always simple, and on this occasion it was so simple that it greatly disappointed me. It was very hard for me to discover the secret of that great power which he had over the minds and hearts of his hearers. Beyond all question in my mind, he was the best *revivalist* of the last fifty years. His doctrines, measures, and manners were unexceptionable, so far as I know, and the influence of the revivals in which he participated is said to have been permanently good. My long ride of four or five hours in the stage with him was the only interview I ever had with him, and although he was known to us all by reputation, and he knew that we were on our way to the Theological Seminary, where



he was also going to visit the professors, yet all that he said to us that made any impression on my mind was a trifling expression which I remembered because it seemed to be unworthy of Mr. Nettleton, and not very witty for anybody. I would not make this record except as a suggestion for myself and the clergy generally.

Upon entering the seminary my chum and I selected our room on the third story, the door opening just at the head of the stairs. Over the door we put our names, "Prime and Gunn." Gunn was a kind-hearted young man, who made good recitations, but rapidly grew wiser than his teachers. He remained in the seminary after I left. On leaving he became an itinerant lecturer, taking very ultra ground as an abolitionist, suffering sometimes from the violence of the mob. I was told that he abandoned the religious ideas of his youth, became melancholy, and an invalid. He may have been useful in ways that have not been made known to the world.

The first moment at my study-table in the seminary was one of exquisite pleasure. Before me was the prospect of one, two, or three years of uninterrupted and undivided study, under the most favorable circumstances, in those departments best suited to delight, improve, and satisfy a religious mind. Every nerve in me seemed thrilled with joy. This was on the instant when I took my chair and first sat down. I was nearly overcome with the emotion awakened by the promise of what was now to be mine. One single desire reigned supreme in my soul,—to be fitted for usefulness. Whatever passions had control before, or have had since, then, in the dew of my youth, I was wholly absorbed in the pursuit of truth for the sake of doing good with it. Ardent,

enthusiastic, and now indulged in what had long been my ruling passion, the possession of time and opportunity for study, I went into the work before me with a zeal that left reason and good sense out of the question. I studied night and day, —beginning before daylight, and keeping at it often till midnight and after. At the close of the first recitation, when I read an essay, Dr. Samuel Miller asked me to remain after the class had retired; he then invited me to his house to take tea, and there kindly tendered to me the use of his private library during my seminary course. Taking me into it, and showing me his vast stores of theology and general literature, he charged me to make free use of any books that I wanted at any time, and come to him at all times as to a brother and friend. This unexpected and unmerited favor at the hands of so venerable and eminent a man was quite overpowering, and I could only, with many thanks, assure him that the best proof of my gratitude would be to avail myself of his great liberality. I went to my room with a “body of divinity” in my arms.

Dr. Archibald Alexander received me with kindness, but his manner was less demonstrative than Dr. Miller’s. On the first occasion of my preaching or rather “speaking a little sermon” before him in the oratory, he encouraged me by making only one remark, and that a compliment, which was said to be unusual with him; his words were, “A very fine specimen of public speaking; call the next.” I wrote this home to my father, who was evidently exceedingly gratified by hearing that I had met with such favor, and I was more pleased with my father’s pleasure than I had been with Dr. Alexander’s. The friendship of these venerable professors

was continued to me with increasing kindness so long as they lived. Two or three years before their death I was visiting Princeton and requested them to furnish me a brief sketch of their lives, giving me the several dates of importance connected with the chief events. This they did, and immediately upon their respective deaths, I prepared and published in the "New York Observer," from these data, full and accurate biographies of those beloved and distinguished men.

The funeral of Dr. Alexander was attended by a vast concourse of clergymen, the Synod of New Jersey being in session at the time. As we were coming from the grave I asked my brother, E. D. G. Prime, to call on the steward of the seminary, who had been a constant attendant on the dying saint, and to learn from him what were some of his last utterances. My brother called, and the steward told him that shortly before Dr. Alexander died, in reply to some remark that was made, he said, "All my theology is comprehended in this, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." In my sketch of Dr. Alexander in the next week's "Observer" this remarkable saying was reported; it was copied and commented on in all the papers; in this country and abroad it was spoken of as one of the most beautiful sayings ever uttered by a dying teacher of theology. I submitted my printed sketch to James W. Alexander, with a request that he would point out any inaccuracies in it; he made several pencil-marks, but this statement he did not alter. But in the biography of his father, which is so minute as to become a large volume, and which is very full in its details of the last days and hours of his venerable father, this saying which I have quoted, and which is more interesting and valuable than any

other of the good man's dying sayings, is not recorded. I have asked many persons, who might be supposed to know, what reason could exist for such an omission, but never heard even a conjectural explanation. The father was the most eminent theological teacher ever raised up in this country. The son was the most accomplished clergyman in the Presbyterian Church of his day. His failure to leave on the imperishable pages of his father's biography this dying testimony to the catholic Christian faith which his departing spirit trusted in as the sum and substance of all divine truth, is to my mind one of the unsolved mysteries of religious literature.

## XLII.

### THE WESTON ACADEMY.

THE SICK STUDENT. — THE ACADEMY ENDOWMENT. — LICENSED TO PREACH. — MARRIED. — TEACHING AND LEARNING. — THE BIBLE SOCIETY ADDRESS. — PREACHING AT FAIRFIELD.

I N less than three months after entering the seminary I was "used up." Incessant study, disturbed sleep or none, little exercise and strong mental excitement, to say nothing of the diet in commons, brought on dyspepsia. I went home during the Christmas holidays, and on my return to the seminary was attacked with inflammation of the lungs. The disease was so violent, and resisted all remedies with such obstinacy, that my life was despaired of. My parents and brother and sisters came on to Princeton to be with me. I recovered, and early in March was able to be taken home. But my lungs were in such a state that it was out of the question for me to think of returning to the seminary to study, and the idea of my ever being able to speak in public was quite improbable. The summer was spent in recruiting wasted strength. In the autumn I was so far restored to health that I felt disposed to begin *to do* something, but what, it was impossible to say.

In September, 1833, having received an invitation to take charge of an academy in Weston, Fairfield County,

Conn., I visited that place to look at the institution and its prospects. In a secluded rural district, I found a school-house, a church, and two or three dwelling-houses, but no sign of a village, and very little evidence of any materials for a school. But the academy had a foundation, and on that I was soon disposed to build. Fifty years before, Mr. Staples had left a handsome sum of money to endow a free school in this place. A large part of the endowment was invested in stock of the Eagle Bank in New Haven, which institution, true to its name and to the Bible declaration respecting riches, took wings and flew away, and the money was lost.

The residue, being on bond and mortgage and in real estate, was now yielding a small sum, which was made available for the education of a few of the poorer children in the neighborhood. The trustees were able to offer me the free use of the academy, my fuel, all the avails of the tuition money, and \$250 per annum. This made provision at once for my support, and I accepted the proposition.

At the October meeting of the Presbytery of Bedford, 1833, I was licensed to preach the gospel, and preached my first sermon on the Sabbath following in the pulpit of Rev. Jacob Green in Bedford, N. Y., from John iii. 14. On the fifteenth of the same month I was married to Elizabeth Thornton Kemeys, of Sing Sing, N. Y., and on the same day left home for my new field of labor. November 4, 1833, on the day when I became twenty-one years of age, I opened my school at Weston Academy. Seven scholars were in attendance! The prospect was far from being brilliant. But the support was so secure that it required no great amount of faith to keep us up. The school grew rapidly in numbers. In less than three

months there were seventy pupils. They came from four and five miles around, in wagons and on horseback; even young ladies came daily from Greenfield Hill and other villages. I had an assistant in one of the more advanced pupils, who knew more of mathematics than I did. I sent for a classmate of mine in college, Rev. Marvin Root, who soon joined me, and we went through the winter with a grand school and great success. Many of these scholars were young men who worked on the farm in the summer, devoting the winter to the pursuit of learning. They were ravenous for knowledge. Awkward and uncouth as many of them were in manner, their minds were bright, vigorous, susceptible, and retentive. It was a joy to teach them.

A few days after I came to Weston, Deacon Seely called upon me with an invitation to preach a sermon before a Bible Society whose anniversary was to be held a week from that day. "A week!" I exclaimed; "why, I must write the sermon, and it is impossible for me with my daily duties to do justice to the subject in *a week*."

"Well, you could n't," said the blunt deacon, "if you had a year." I consented, and preached as well as I could.

A committee from the Congregational Church in Fairfield came up and invited me to supply their pulpit for three months. This was a call from which I shrunk. I had not half a dozen sermons in the world, and was teaching all day and studying my lessons every night. This studying lessons was a terrible task. Some of the pupils were able to teach me, but this I was not willing to confess, and when they could not solve a problem in mathematics what was I to do? One day a young man

wanted my help in a problem, and I told him to leave it, and I would work it out after school. I spent the evening on it, till midnight, with no success. Nearly crazed with the excitement, and vexed with failure, I went to bed. Waking or dreaming, I do not know which, the solution opened before me. I rose, lighted my candle, and wrote it down. It was all right in the morning. With such labors pressing on me it was doubtless wrong to heed the Fairfield invitation. But I accepted it and for three months supplied the pulpit; oftentimes exchanging with neighboring ministers when I was unable to make preparation for the services.



## XLIII.

### WESTON AND FAIRFIELD.

ROGER M. SHERMAN. — CHIEF-JUSTICE DAGGETT. — HARTFORD CONVENTION. — THE DISPUTED BOUNDARY. — A VIOLENT TEMPER. — GREENFIELD HILL. — BEREAVEMENT AND DISCOURAGEMENT.

WHILE I was preaching in Fairfield, during my residence at Weston, Roger M. Sherman, an eminent lawyer, and son of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was the leading man in the church. He invited me always to stop at his house, and his acquaintance was a treasure and blessing. He was profoundly religious, and would have been a great theologian if he had not been a great jurist. His kindness to me, a boy minister preaching to *him*, was touching, and is cherished with gratitude now, when I am old and he is among the angels who excel in strength.

At the bar he was ready with logic or wit. In a suit where Mr. Daggett, afterwards chief-justice, was his opponent, he was looking up a reference, and being slow in finding it, Mr. Daggett to bother him a little said playfully, "Brother Sherman, won't you have my spectacles?" "No," he replied, "there was never any truth discovered through your spectacles."

Mr. Sherman was a man of the highest order of intellect, and would have been a prominent man in the affairs of the nation had he not been "implicated" in

early life in the Hartford Convention of 1815. I think he was a member of it. All who were identified with it were ever after under a cloud of suspicion. Though the convention was composed of pure and patriotic men, they adopted some principles of "State rights" that were unsound and dangerous,—substantially the same with those on which the Southern States afterward based their doctrine of secession. The "right of secession or nullification" is substantially affirmed in the declaration put forth by the Hartford Convention.

My association with Mr. Sherman was a source of great pleasure and advantage to me. In the course of the winter I had many very delightful interviews, in which he always appeared the intelligent, learned man, a great lawyer, and a modest, humble Christian. He is now dead, and the dwelling in which I had these interviews with him is the parsonage of the church which I served, he having left it to the church by his will. He has also left an honored name that will be long held in remembrance and veneration in the community and the State.

While I was at Weston two land-owners came to me with a dispute as to the line of division between their farms. The case was one of those that have so often involved the most protracted and expensive litigation, with serious neighborhood and family quarrels. It was a serious matter for me, a boy of twenty-one, to undertake the decision of such a question, but they submitted the deeds of their respective farms to me and desired me from the evidence therein contained to run the line. Surveying was one of the branches of education I was then teaching, but I knew little enough about it. I took the deeds, drew a map and laid off the farms, and found

where, on the strength of the surveys described, the dividing line ought to be, and then I marked it on my map. The decision was accepted, and as it has been undisturbed to the present, it will probably remain undisturbed hereafter. Certainly it was far better to submit the matter to the judgment of one disinterested person than to quarrel about it through life and then leave it as a bone of contention to their heirs. I do not mention the names of the parties, lest the mention should lead to inquiry about the line! The original parties are dead, and I buried them both.

My school in the summer season was not so large as in the winter, many of the students spending their time in working upon farms. But it was sufficiently large. Several pupils from distant places came to board with me and attend school. One of them had a temper of such quickness and violence that he was a dangerous companion. He was so fierce that at one time he plunged the staff of an umbrella into the face of one of the boys and came near to destroying his eye. It seemed to me to be a duty to send him home to his father in the State of New York. This I did at once. The boy turned out well afterward. Whether my prompt and energetic action was useful or injurious, I never knew, but the lad went to college and the Theological Seminary, and is now a useful minister in the Presbyterian Church. I met him in May, 1862, in the General Assembly at Columbus, Ohio.

Greenfield Hill was about four miles from Weston. This is the beautiful village in which the great Dr. Timothy Dwight once preached and taught school. I preached several times in the large church there. I need not say that neither the audiences nor the sermons

were as great as in the days of the President of Yale College. The Hon. Mr. Tomlinson, formerly Governor of the State and member of Congress, was a resident. As he was a trustee of the academy at Weston, I was frequently brought into contact with him, and remember him as a pleasant, kind-hearted gentleman. He was highly esteemed in all the relations of private and public life.

In the middle of the summer and the session of my school, I was suddenly broken up at Weston by the death of my wife. We had been married less than a year. This blow unfitted me to pursue my labors alone, and I left Weston. In after years I wrote a brief biography of my departed wife, and published it in 1840 under the name of "Elizabeth Thornton."

Thus was I again thrown upon the world, with no field of labor in view, and with little heart to do anything.

## XLIV.

### MY FIRST PASTORATE.

BALLSTON SPA. — YOUTHFUL LABORS. — A COLD WINTER. —  
THE WEAK CONVERT. — BIBLICAL DISCUSSION. — AN IRRE-  
LIGIOUS HUSBAND.

HAVING heard that a new church in the village of Ballston Spa, N. Y., was in want of a pastor, I went there in October, 1834, and spent a Sabbath. I preached in the Court House, for the congregation was newly organized and had no house of their own. It was certainly remarkable that the first place into which I came to preach with any view to settlement should be part of the same town in which I was born. The congregation was a colony from the church of which Rev. Stephen Porter, my uncle, was pastor when I was born in his house. I had never visited the place from the first year of my life till now. I preached twice on the Sabbath and attended a prayer-meeting at a private house in the evening. This prayer-meeting was composed of people of several churches, and some of them were still under the influence of a revival recently enjoyed in the village. In the meeting a colored woman rose and made an ardent address. It was the first time I had heard anything of the kind, and it startled me. After meeting I learned that she was a member of the Baptist church.

I entered upon the pastoral work with great zeal, and little discretion. Full of youthful ardor and burning with desire to win souls to Christ, and to build up the little church, I began a round of duties, or rather labors, sufficient to task the strength of the strongest man, and I was a feeble youth. The congregation was scattered widely and I visited them in company with an elder, going from house to house, talking and praying with them all. I appointed evening meetings in remote school-houses, and as they were better attended on Sabbath evenings, I lectured almost every Sunday night after having preached twice during the day. These evening meetings were crowded and the school-houses hot. The winter came on very cold, and after meeting I would ride to my home three or four miles away. Sometimes I stayed at the farmers' houses and slept in cold rooms, though accustomed to sleep near a fire. The weather was intensely cold. One morning the thermometer marked twenty degrees below zero, yet as soon as breakfast was had, I set off in a sleigh on a round of pastoral visitation, kept it up all day, preached at a country school-house in the evening, and reached home at bedtime. This winter's work injured me for life. It brought on the *bronchitis*, and my throat has not been sound to this day. But the work prospered greatly. My church grew. New families joined the congregation. Sinners were converted. During the whole winter it was a continuous gentle revival.

One Sabbath-day, as I was preaching in the Court House to a large audience, there was a singular occurrence. The subject of discourse was the lepers of Samaria who reasoned in regard to casting themselves into the hands of the Syrians, "If they save us alive we shall

live, if they kill us we can but die." I closed with a warm appeal to the unconverted to come to Christ *now*. At the close of the prayer after sermon, as I said *Amen* I was startled by the voice of a man on the floor at the foot of the platform on which I was standing. He had come there while I was praying, and as soon as I had finished he cried out from his knees, "Is there no help for me?" Recovering from my surprise, I addressed a few words to him, and then asked the congregation to join with me in special prayer in his behalf. In a few days I heard that he had found peace in believing. But he proved to be a weak and fanatical man, who never did any great credit to religion. Perhaps he was one of my converts, not the Lord's.

In the neighborhood was an excellent old man, whose son was one of the elders of our church, but the father was a Methodist. Whenever I was there visiting or preaching, I stayed at his house. Old Mr. Beach always wanted me to argue with him on the points of Calvinism, which he hated intensely. He would never let me off without inviting a discussion, which I always declined, telling him that we were such good friends and had such pleasant times together that I would prefer not to run the risk of our getting into a quarrel. But he would not be satisfied. At length, one day when he was very urgent, I said that I would go into the matter with him if we could both confine ourselves to the Bible. One should present a passage in support of his view, and the other should explain it and then give another. To this he consented and told me to begin. I said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil." "What's that?" said he; "I never read that in the Bible; where is it?" "Oh, yes," I replied, "it

is in the proverbs of Solomon." "Solomon, Solomon," he cried, "the old debauchee; who cares what Solomon says?" "Oh, well," I said, "if you don't care what the Bible says, there is no need of *my* saying anything, so we have come to the end of the argument at the beginning." Our discussion was never resumed.

Among my hearers was the wife of a rich man, but irreligious, and reputed to be an enemy of religion and inclined to persecute his wife, who was a regular attendant at church, though not a member. We had been holding a series of religious union meetings, and had invited those who desired religious conversation to come forward to the front seats. One morning I was surprised by a call at my study from this gentleman, to whom I had scarcely ever spoken. He came hurriedly into my room and took a seat, saying that he had come to me on a very serious errand. I expressed pleasure in seeing him, and he went on: —

"I have come to ask a favor, a very great favor, of you, sir, and I hope you will not refuse me." I replied that I would gladly do anything in my power to serve him.

"Well, you know, I presume, Mr. Prime, that it is my misfortune to be married to one of the worst of women." I interrupted him to say that I knew nothing of the sort; he proceeded: "It is true, one of the very worst, and I do not believe that anything short of the grace of God will ever make her any better; and I have called to ask you if you will not make some special effort to get her converted. It would be a great step toward it to get her on the anxious seat, and I want you to try to persuade her to go there the next time you see her in meeting." I now perceived that he was either seeking



to make a fool of me or his wife, and I said, "I will do all I can to persuade your wife and others to seek religion, — that is my duty; and I will tell you what I think will be one of the most likely things to interest her in the matter." "What's that?" he asked, eagerly. "Why, to seek it yourself." "That's out of the question," he answered, roughly. "Not at all," said I, and began to argue the question, but he cut me short. "I did not come here to talk about myself," he said. But I continued to urge the point, and he left me as abruptly as he entered.

## XLV.

### THE BALLSTON CHURCH.

BUILT BY TWO CENTS. — THE CANDID PATIENT. — AARON AND HUR. — UNHAPPY TEXTS.

AFTER accepting the call to Ballston I continued to preach in the Court House. But the people, very soon after my coming among them, went to work in earnest to build a church. There were no rich men among them. The wealthiest was Michael Middlebrook, an old bachelor farmer, deformed and diseased, a good man whom all respected highly. He subscribed \$300, several others \$200 each. These were considered liberal subscriptions. Together they amounted to about half the sum necessary. Then it was proposed that I should visit the other churches of the Presbytery (of Albany) and ask for aid. I selected Johnstown as the first to be attempted. Arranging the time by correspondence, I went there and preached a sermon in which I demonstrated to my own satisfaction, and I hoped to that of the people, that our new church enterprise at Ballston Spa was one of the most important objects of Christian benevolence, and I appealed to them most earnestly to give liberally to help us on in our great work. Having concluded my appeal, and being very anxious for the result, I leaned my head on my hand and looked down from the high pulpit to see the gold poured into the plates as the elders went

around for the contribution. The first man, a well-to-do-looking farmer, put in *one cent*. The next, of the same stamp, put in *one cent*. I did not look any further. The collection amounted to \$13 and some cents. I returned home the next day, crestfallen indeed, but filled with one new idea. I called the people together, reported my success, told the story of the *two cents*, and then said if any more foreign begging was done, some one else would do it. They talked the matter over. Michael Middlebrook said he would give half of his subscription in addition, making \$450. Every man halved his in the same way. That gave us *three quarters* of all that was wanted. The church was then built, and seats were sold to pay nearly the whole of the remainder. *So those two cents built the church*. If I had raised \$100 instead of \$13, I should have gone on and on and perhaps picked up a thousand in all, and the people would have done no more, and perhaps would have had a debt to this day. I have told this story many times since, and it has stimulated many people to help themselves rather than to depend on foreign aid.

My first year of pastoral work was marked by many peculiar incidents. At a meeting of Session it was mentioned that reports were in circulation to the effect that one of the older members of the church was in the habit of indulging too freely in the use of strong drink. After some deliberation it was thought best that the minister and one of the elders should call on him and endeavor to influence him for the better, if it were true as reported. Accordingly I went with one of the elders to see him. He was at least three times as old as I was, a tall, venerable man, a plain farmer, of excellent character. When I sat down before him it seemed to me

much more becoming that he should talk to me, a boy, rather than that I should lecture him on any of his habits. However, duty was to be done, and I began. After much circumlocution and various excuses and episodes I finally managed to bring out the great fact that we had been sorry to hear that a report had got abroad that he was sometimes in the habit of making too much use of intoxicating liquors. It was out, and I held my breath to hear his reply. "Well, I would n't wonder now if it was so, not a bit, for the fact is, I'm so troubled with the *flimmatary rimmatis*, that I have to bathe myself *extarnally* and *intarnally* with cider brandy."

We gave him a few words of caution, assured him of our sympathy, and after praying with him, came away without any serious apprehensions for his safety. Had he been fond of "drink," he would not have been so ready to tell us all about it. He lived on ten, fifteen, I do not know but twenty years longer, and then died universally respected, no one ever hearing of his being "worse for liquor."

Coming home from a service where I had preached from the words, "And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands," one of the congregation, a prominent man in the town, said to me, "I wonder you did n't touch on the argument in favor of female influence in that text to-night." I replied that "I don't see where it comes in." "Why," said he, "it says *her* stayed up his hands as much as Aaron did." He thought *Hur* was the pronoun *her* for *she*. I made the best of it by admitting frankly "I never thought of it before." But it taught me to be very careful to explain terms, if a man who ought to be as intelligent as any one of my hearers *could* make such a blunder.

An ardent Universalist called upon me and asked me to attend the funeral of a man who had committed suicide by hanging himself, a miserable drunkard without friends or relatives. He said it would be expected that I should preach a sermon. As he was very importunate I consented to do so, and on going to the hovel in the field where the body lay, about to be buried at the expense of the town, I found the place full as it could be of a class of people very like the deceased. The man who had asked me to attend stood by the rude coffin, and directly in front of me, as I preached from the verse in Revelation which contains "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." It was an unwise selection of a subject, and it would have been much better to have given such an audience the sweetest words of the gospel. I had a good hint on this subject at another time when I was riding with Elder Corey on a Sabbath afternoon, to the poorhouse of the county, where I had made an appointment to preach. "Well," said I, "it is about time I had found a subject for my discourse. I have made no preparation, have not even a text; suppose I take 'The poor have the gospel preached to them.'" The good elder mused a minute and said, "Well, now, it seems to me it's hard enough to have to live on pudding and milk without being twitted of it. If I were you I would take a text that would not remind them of anything peculiar in their condition; talk to them as sinners saved by grace or in need of a Saviour, and you will be more likely to reach the mark." This was sound advice, good sense, and showed a knowledge of human nature. I acted upon it. Afterward I preached there from the words "Are the consolations of God small with thee?"

## XLVI.

### MY BRIEF PASTORATE.

THE DYING MOTHER. — DR. KIRK'S ADVICE. — ZEAL THAT CONSUMED. — REST AND RESIGNATION. — REMOVAL TO NEW-BURGH.

**D**URING my pastorate in Ballston I wrote in a notebook a few sketches of some incidents which made a deep impression on my mind and heart. One of these I subsequently prepared as an article for the "New York Observer," which was the first of my regular contributions with the signature "Irenæus." Another of these is the record of the death-bed experience of a mother, which I reproduce here as an affecting incident in the first year of my ministry. I was called to visit a lady who was the mother of four children, the youngest of whom had been born but four days before. She had cultivated her own heart with diligence, and religion had thrown around her disposition, which was naturally the sweetest, all those charms which make their possessor the idol of all hearts — and the envy of none. To see her was to love her.

Her intellect, which was of the finest mould, had been improved by a finished education, and the society of the city had given to her manner the polish of refinement, and enabled her to adorn the sphere which she cheered by her smiles. As a wife she was affectionate

and devoted, and all that affection was returned by the fondest love and assiduous kindness of one of the tenderest of husbands and most amiable of men.

But as a mother Mrs. E. was peculiarly distinguished. Naturally of a domestic turn of mind, she devoted much of her time to the moral and intellectual instruction of her children. They were excellent illustrations of the power of a mother to exert a great and admirable influence upon those whom God has intrusted to her to be formed for virtue and honors. Their minds were stored with all that knowledge which children so young were capable of understanding, and their tempers and dispositions so happily governed that the duty of instruction and of learning was not considered a task but a pleasure, both by mother and little ones.

This lovely mother being sick with a deadly fever, I received from her husband the following note: "Dear Sir, — My poor wife, whom we have given up, desires to see you and to converse with you. Will you come and see us in this hour of affliction. Yours, J. E."

Without the least delay I hurried to her bedside. I had been absent from the place and had not heard of her situation, or should have been there before. I found her in doubt and darkness. The message of death had fallen unexpectedly upon her ear, and the violence of the news had shaken her confidence in God. Her discomposure evidently proceeded from the shock which nature had received by the sudden approach of the king of terrors.

I endeavored to lead her to a deep and careful examination of the ground on which she had trusted in times past, to lay open the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, and to convince her that although she might

never have given up her soul into the hands of the Lord, she could do so *then* and be safe. She was too feeble to converse much, and I prayed with her and soon left her.

She lamented deeply her unfaithful life. She felt that she had not been as active and devoted in her Christian course as she ought to have been. She was distressed with a sense of her past neglect of duty and her own backwardness in the cause of Christ. But she had lived a consistent and devoted life, and we who wept around her sorrowed that she could not derive that satisfaction from the review which we received.

In the evening I visited her again, and found that she had passed from darkness into light. The clouds that had obscured her mind had vanished, and she now was settled in her faith, her feet were on the rock. She had discovered the foundation and was resting thereon. On the next day I found her rapidly drawing nigh to the gate of heaven. Her speech had so far failed her that she could only reply in single syllables to questions which we proposed. Her only sister, who was at Albany, and whom she had manifested the strongest desire to see, had arrived, and she seemed exceedingly gratified at the opportunity of meeting her again. Her little ones were now brought to her, and she took leave of them with tenderness and composure. She intrusted them to the care of their father, and committed them to the hands of Him who had promised to "take them up." During her sickness she had prayed much for them, and always manifested the most perfect assurance that the Lord would be their portion and the guide of their tender years. She derived consolation from the fact that she had labored assiduously to instil into their



minds those principles of virtue which would be a safeguard amid the temptations of youth and the snares of a deceitful world, and in faith in the goodness of God she was enabled to resign them unreservedly to him.

But the hour of her departure was at hand. She saw the approach of death, but was unmoved by the sight. Gradually she sunk into his arms, and with the clear exercise of all her faculties, with a bright faith in the merits of Christ, and a perfect confidence of her acceptance with him she fell asleep.

After having preached and labored in Ballston for several months, I was ordained in the summer of 1835 in the Court House, as the new church was not yet finished. Rev. E. N. Kirk, of Albany, preached the sermon. While he was in my study he said to me: "Write for the press. Cultivate the habit. Write often. Write your sermons, and do not depend, as I have done, on extempore efforts, but write, — and write for the press; the press is to be the great instrument of power in this country." These words made a deep and permanent impression, and exerted a lasting, if not a guiding influence on my subsequent life. I was married in August to Eloisa L. Williams, daughter of Moses Williams, one of the members of the church of which I was now the pastor.

During all the summer I had been troubled with sore throat. Dr. Freeman had prescribed repeatedly for the trouble, but it grew worse rather than better. In the fall, as the cool weather came on, it was much more troublesome, and I became convinced that I must rest from preaching and have time to recover. The church building was now finished, and after dedicating it I took six months' leave of absence and went down to New-

burgh, on the Hudson River, where my parents were now residing.

Thus my first pastoral labors were of little more than a year's duration. But they were of lasting influence upon my future life. I entered upon my work with ardor, amounting to enthusiasm, preached far more than was proper and under circumstances that exposed me to immediate injury, neglected my study for the sake of visiting the people, aimed at present impression rather than solid instruction, and in a few months was used up. It is strange that my elders and other friends did not check my zeal or direct it more wisely. They rather urged me on. Somebody was always wanting me to go here or there. I have actually known appointments to be made and given out for me to preach at certain places, without any previous consultation with me, and in one or two instances two or three were made for the same evening miles asunder!

But it was a year of usefulness. I had the joy of seeing some brought to the knowledge of the truth. The church was built up spiritually, while the temple itself was rising from the corner-stone which I laid with my youthful hands. I saw it finished and dedicated, with an overflowing congregation in it, and then I was obliged to leave it with only a faint hope of returning. I spent the winter away, and at the end of six months was in no condition to resume the work. My people then proposed that I try an absence for a year. But I declined on their account to take such a vacation and resigned my pastoral charge. I went up to Ballston, preached a farewell sermon, and returned to Newburgh, where I had charge of the academy, a high school for boys.

## XLVII.

### NEWBURGH-ON-THE-HUDSON.

THE ACADEMY. — SMALL-POX. — FOREIGN MISSIONS. — DR. JOHNSTON. — RECOVERED HEALTH.

MY last letter closed with an account of the circumstances in which I left Ballston and removed to Newburgh-on-the-Hudson. At Newburgh I entered immediately upon the charge of the academy, my father having been appointed its principal, though his time was occupied with a female seminary in the same place. He had taken a house in which there were a few pupils as boarders, and in this my wife and I took up our residence for the winter. A few days after our arrival my wife was seized with the *small-pox*. We had eight boys and young men in the house, all of whom had, of course, been exposed by being near her before it was developed. What to do with these pupils it was very difficult for me to determine. If I sent them to their several homes I might send the disease into as many families. If I kept them all there some of them might die of it, and I should be reproached for detaining them after the danger was discovered. After serious and anxious deliberation I decided that it was *duty* to keep them, and not to expose others through them. Taking the two oldest, and informing them of the state of things, and requesting them to assume the charge of the household, I shut myself up with my wife and nursed

her through one of the worst cases of malignant confluent small-pox. There was not a place on her face where the point of a pin could be placed without touching a sore. Yet she lived, and was not marked in the slightest degree. And I do not recollect that I ever thought while she was sick whether she would be marked or not. Not one of the pupils nor any other member of the family took the disease.

After her recovery I entered earnestly upon the work of teaching, having among my pupils several young men who were afterwards useful and excellent ministers of the gospel. During this period I made numerous contributions to the newspaper published at Newburgh, many of which were used editorially. I remember that some of these related to the terminus of the Erie Railroad, and advocated Newburgh as more desirable for this purpose than Piermont. It had been my custom to contribute twenty-five dollars a year to the cause of Foreign Missions, but my income from teaching was now so small that this seemed a very large sum for any purpose whatever, benevolent or selfish. One evening my wife and I were discussing the practicability of making the usual annual contribution, until I concluded by saying, "Well, I am going to give the twenty-five dollars any way." Before the evening was over the editor made a friendly call, and as he retired handed me twenty-five dollars in payment for articles which had been written without any expectation of remuneration. It seemed to us at the time that this was a special provision for our relief in making the usual contribution to Foreign Missions.

Dr. John Johnston was at this time pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Newburgh, which relation he

had sustained since 1807, when this church was associated with the one at New Windsor. In 1810 the Newburgh church was strong enough to secure his services for itself. This pastorate extended through nearly half a century. For thirty-three years of this time he labored in great harmony with the Rev. Dr. McCarrell, pastor of the Associate Reformed Church, and for thirty-nine years with the Rev. Dr. Brown, rector of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Newburgh. I have often found occasion to speak and write of that excellent and useful man, whose walk and conversation were without spot and blameless, and whose life was one long testimony to the power of simple goodness. He was greatly blessed in his wife, who watched over him like a mother. He has said, playfully, at my table, when pressed to take this or that, "My wife does not allow it." Oliver Goldsmith had him to sit for his portrait when he drew the picture of the village pastor, who "watched and wept, and prayed, and felt for all." He rarely preached a sermon without weeping. But he was sincere, feeling all he said as he pleaded with sinners and with saints. His tears were no evidence of weakness, for he had immense energy, industry, and endurance. He went about doing good, with vitality and perseverance rarely equalled in the ministry.

For a year and a half I remained at Newburgh teaching. Though I had advantageous offers from leading citizens in regard to the establishment of an academy on a good financial basis, my health had improved so much that I was again ready to undertake the work of a pastorate. How this took place will be recorded in another letter,

## XLVIII.

### MATTEAWAN.

INSTALLATION. — CHRISTIAN UNION. — SCENERY AND SUMMER.  
— CHURCH AND PEOPLE. — OBSERVING AND RECORDING.

**D**URING the year and a half in which I taught the academy at Newburgh I was frequently invited to preach in neighboring churches, and occasionally in Matteawan, Dutchess county, N. Y., on the opposite side of the river, about a mile from Fishkill Landing. This resulted in my being called to the Presbyterian Church at Matteawan, where I was installed May 23, 1837. My father, Rev. N. S. Prime, delivered the charge to the pastor on that occasion, and it was printed at the request of a large number. This request as it is printed on the fly-leaf shows that the spirit of Christian union was a practical force at that day in that community. It is signed by a committee appointed "at a meeting of a number of the inhabitants of this village from the several religious denominations," and besides the members of the Presbyterian Church, the committee included representatives of the Dutch Reformed, Methodist, Baptist and Episcopal churches.

Many of my impressions and experiences during my Matteawan pastorate are given in two of my small books, "Records of a Village Pastor," and "The Highland Pastor." In the introductory pages of the first-

mentioned I have given a sketch of my church and its surroundings, without giving any names. As this was written and published during my residence at Matteawan, I repeat it in this connection as being better than a recollection after many years:—

“Often have I blessed the Lord for his kindness in casting my lot in this pleasant place, and in giving me a heritage among this people. The village lies a mile from the banks of the Hudson, and at the northern base of the Highlands. Nature could scarcely have done more for us, and if we are not happy among ourselves, it is because the gifts of Providence and the richer gifts of grace are slighted and abused.

“Strangers that visit this region, in the summer season especially, admire the peace that prevails in the village, the beauty of the scenery that surrounds it, and the neatness and order that mark its streets and dwellings. The simple Grecian temple and the parsonage adjoining always attract attention as objects of interest, and the taste displayed in their arrangement and construction impresses the visitor with the fact that the villagers prize the institutions of religion. If the stranger should extend his inquiries he would not be long in learning that the external appearances of regard for the order of God’s house, and the comfort of the pastor and his family, are also indications of the value they set upon the means of grace; and should he pursue his acquaintance he would find that in the public services of the sanctuary, in the social prayer-meeting, and in the daily duties of the parish, the pastor and people are happy in each other’s love. The Spirit of God often lingers among these hills and visits the hearts of the cottages; refreshing the humble believer with his gracious influ-

ence, and winning the sinner to the embrace of Jesus. These seasons of revival we have found to be the sweetest of our blessings; and there are some who are never happy unless evidence is given that the Holy Spirit is hovering over us, or descending with converting and sanctifying power.

“Death knows our village. Sad for us would it be if we forgot that we must die. Often, often since I have been the shepherd, has the owner called for one and another of the flock, — most frequently for the lambs; and these calls have served to remind us that health and happiness are no security against the great Destroyer.

“For my own gratification, and with the hope of doing good to others, it has been my practice to make hasty records of passing providences; and sometimes those events that in themselves have appeared to possess no special interest have suggested thoughts solemn and perhaps not altogether unprofitable. This habit of *recording* has induced a habit of *observing*; so that it is seldom I visit a sick chamber or meet with an anxious sinner that my own heart is not impressed with some truth that if suitably improved would make me a better man. Not unfrequently the incident has been so unimportant that I have suffered it to pass, while the train of thought awakened has been preserved; and by following up this habit for years, the records have multiplied on my hands. They were written with the humble hope that God would bless them to others as he has blessed them to the writer; and they were sent forth with many prayers that this hope may not be in vain. Among these records is one of a young woman who was in many respects a parallel to the ‘Dairyman’s Daughter,’ whom Leigh Richmond has made famous.



A marriage occasion shows how this union must remind every thoughtful person of the nearer and more intimate and indissoluble union between Christ and his church. The inquiry of a neighbor whether he could rightly go to the Universalist Church gave me the opportunity to show that hearing error can do no good, that it often does great injury, and that he who goes to hear false teachers sets a bad example, which is sure to be followed. The interview with an anxious sinner in the pastor's study, and with a father by the dying bed of his idolized daughter, are among these records, and they are as real and vivid to-day as if they had just occurred in ordinary pastoral experience. One that touches me even now is the story of a daughter's love:

“In an upper room of a humble dwelling I found a dying girl. She was about eighteen years of age, and far from home. In early life she had left her mother's cot ‘in the Emerald Isle,’ and with a band of emigrants she had sought America, trusting to the labor of her hands for her daily bread. In one of our thousand mills she had found employment, but had laid up nothing against an evil day; and when sickness overtook her, and consumption stretched her on a dying bed, she was dependent utterly on the charity of others, — relatives she had none on this side of the great water.

“Upon sitting down, and speaking of the only refuge of the soul in the hour of dissolving nature, and of the the happiness of those who trust in Jesus, I asked her if she felt willing to die. ‘Yes,’ said she, ‘but — but — I should like to see my mother;’ and as she spoke, her eyes filled with tears, she drew the covering over her head and wept.

“This was my first visit. She asked me to come again.

They told me as I came away that she would probably live a month or two; but she breathed her last just after she told me she would like to see her mother. I hope she will. Poor girl! — poor as the world goes; for charity gave her burial. Blessed girl! if now with Lazarus in Abraham's bosom."

## XLIX.

### MATTEAWAN AND NEWBURGH.

RIDE TO WEST POINT. — IMPROMPTU PREACHING. — AFTER  
MANY DAYS. — OLD AND NEW SCHOOL.

ALL the days and weeks of my Highland pastorate were full of those incidents which are characteristic of the life of a clergyman who is interested in the welfare of many households. Many of them have been recorded in my letters and books. It is always singular to note the personal experiences which make the strongest impression on our minds and memories. In one of my old note-books I have recorded the following incident as having occurred October 2, 1838: —

“Presbytery was to meet at Buttermilk Falls, two miles south of West Point. In the morning I set out to attend the meeting. Finding that the fog was so dense on the river that the steamboat would not probably be down in time to enable me to reach the Falls by three o'clock P. M., the hour of meeting, I started on horseback. The road was rough and dangerous, and I had never ridden so far on horseback at one time. But being anxious to be punctual, I made the effort, and after riding about six miles, while I was descending a hill through the woods some distance from any habitation, my horse stumbled and fell, and threw me over his head to the distance of ten feet. I struck upon my hands and knees and did not sustain the slightest external or

internal injury. For this kind preservation I desire to record my heartfelt thanks to Him who has given His angels charge over us lest at any time we should dash our foot against a stone.

“Remounting my horse, I rode on a mile further to Cold Spring, and thence was taken by a row-boat to the Falls, three miles and a half, and reached there in time for the meeting, and preached at the ordination of Mr. P. L. de St. Croix.

“I was the more struck with this providence from its being the second within a short time. On the 6th of June, while returning from Presbytery, I was thrown from a wagon and precipitated some distance down a bank, but was not injured at all. The catalogue of mercies of a similar kind might be greatly extended from my experience.”

Within a few weeks I have had a singular reminiscence of Dr. Johnston, the Newburgh pastor of whom I have written. Coming over from Matteawan one evening, I dropped in at the service in the lecture-room of his church. As he saw me come in he came down from the desk and said to me, “You must preach for me to night.” “Oh no, not at all,” said I; “I beg to be excused.” After a good deal of persuasion he brought me to the desk to sit with him and take some part in the service. I thought he would ask me to make the prayer before the sermon, but instead of that he went on and made it himself, and prayed for the “young minister who was about to preach the Word.” I thought that cool, under the circumstances. However, he was old, and I was young, and after he had completed his prayer, he turned to me and said, “Now, if there is any preaching done to-night, you have got to do it,”

He then gave out a hymn, while I looked for a text, and the more I looked for it the more I could n't find it. There was not a passage in the Bible, it seemed to me, that I had ever seen before, or if I had, that I could make anything out of. While they were singing, I looked and looked, and when they had come to the end of the singing, I had not found a line in the Bible from which I could speak. I arose and recollected this expression, "Who is on the Lord's side?" I rehearsed from memory the circumstances under which it was spoken, but I did not say where the words were uttered, because I did not know, and could not tell, only I knew it was from the Old Testament somewhere. I went on and preached as well as I could from those words. I never heard anything from it until I went the other day into a meeting in the city of New York to engage in Christian work. It was at the opening of the Church for Strangers, and a gentleman who for years has been one of the prominent, leading, useful members in one of the largest and most influential congregations in New York came up to me and said, "I never saw you that I did not want to put my arms around you;" and he did put his arms around me. Said he: "Thirty years ago I heard you preach in Dr. Johnston's lecture-room. I recollect how you began by telling the people that you did not expect to preach, and that you could not find a text from which to preach. But," said he, "you preached a sermon that led me then and there to devote myself to the service of God." And he has been a useful Christian, giving his time and his money and his labors to God ever since. That is a pleasant reminiscence of Father Johnston, because he pressed that sermon out of me under most extraordinary cir-

cumstances, and I rejoice that I suffered at his hands in that way that night.

It was in 1838 that the Synod of New York, at its meeting in Dr. Johnston's church, Newburgh, was divided into two bodies, subsequently known as Old and New School. I was one of forty-nine who protested against any division at all, and after the division had been effected by calling the roll, it was agreed that those known as the Old School should remain in this church, and go on with their business. Another of the sister churches in the village invited those who adhered to the other assembly, commonly called the New School Assembly, to meet in their house, and we protestants against any division were left out in the cold. However, we obtained the privilege of meeting in a building close by that was called the "High School." So that the Old School had one place, and the New School had another place, and we became the "High School," and were so known at that time in Newburgh. But our numbers were soon enlarged by the addition of those who had voted to go with the New School. Before they arrived we had elected Rev. Dr. Skinner as moderator, and were proceeding with our business. My father had so much room at his disposal in the Powellton House, it being vacation, that he entertained at this time as his guests all the ministers and elders of his Presbytery. He also was among the number of those who protested against the division. Subsequently he and all others took their places with the body holding views with which they were in sympathy.

## L.

### WRITING FOR THE "OBSERVER."

**D**URING my pastorate at Matteawan I began to write for the "New York Observer." My first article, signed "Irenæus," was printed in the number dated Aug. 18, 1838, and is entitled "The Eleventh Hour." After this my articles appeared every week.

In the "Observer" of April 27, 1839, there is printed "The Narrative of the State of Religion in North River Presbytery," signed "Samuel J. Prime, Stated Clerk." This misprint of initial letters is one of the common errors.

While preaching at Matteawan my health again failed. I was so seriously affected by bronchitis that I could not recover from the effect of one Sunday's work before another required an exertion to which I was not equal. Under these circumstances, with great discouragement and regret, I was compelled to seek some other employment. I applied to the paper to which I was contributing every week and my application was successful. In the early spring I removed to New York, and began what has proved my life work on the "New York Observer." From 1840 to 1849 I performed the duties which are now divided among several persons. Being elected secretary of the American Bible Society in

1849, I left the "Observer" and entered its service, but my health failing in consequence of the public speaking it involved, at the end of a year I became associate editor of the "Presbyterian." This connection also lasted but one year, and in 1851 I resumed my former position in the "New York Observer."

On April 2, 1885, the completion of my forty-five years of editorial work was celebrated in the editorial rooms of the "New York Observer" by a social gathering of the entire working force of the establishment. On that occasion I made the following remarks in regard to the history of this portion of my career: —

"MY FRIENDS, — I thank you for the kindness you show me in responding to my invitation. I desired on this the forty-fifth anniversary of my birthday in the 'New York Observer' to break bread with my fellow-laborers, and it is a heartfelt pleasure to see you all, and here.

"The opening of the year 1840 found me the pastor of a village church, for the second time broken down in health and despairing of being able to continue in any labor that required public speaking. I said to my father, 'I must give up preaching.' Now it is a good thing to have a father to say an encouraging word when you are down, and this is what he said, 'God help you, my son, you are fit for nothing else.' In reply to his question, 'What do you propose to do?' I said, 'I intend to be the editor of a religious newspaper; I will apply for a place on the "New York Observer," and failing to get it, to some other paper and another until I find a situation.' My first application was successful, and in the spring of the year 1840 I came to this city.



"The paper was not so large then as now, but you know it is harder work to make a small newspaper than a large one. My predecessor remained with me three weeks to show me the ropes. He then left the deck, and I was cook, cabin boy, and all hands in one. I wrote the editorials, revised the manuscripts, made the selections, got up the news, religious and secular, read all the proofs, and had no help in any department except that Mr. David M. Stone, now the distinguished editor of the 'Journal of Commerce,' contributed a financial article weekly.

"By and by an assistant was allowed me, but the labor was very great, and I often broke down. In the year 1853 I went abroad for my health, being taken from my bed and carried to the dock, where I lay on three barrel-heads till the tug came and took me out to the ship.

"My brother Edward was called from his parish to take my place, and he remained after my return, and has been here ever since. To his advent, to his aid, I attribute my continued life far more than to any medicines, voyages, or vacations. Thirty-two years he has stood at the wheel with constancy, fidelity, and devotion, which can never be expressed in words. If he were not my brother I would say far more. I could not say less, brother or no brother, and be an honest man.

"In 1858 I became one of the proprietors, and since that time the number of aids in the editorial and the business departments has been largely increased, until now it requires at least seven persons to do the work which I did alone in the beginning. And then I did not do as much as the senior editor before me. He managed the business office, edited the paper alone, got the

papers ready for the mails, took them in a hand-cart and wheeled them to the post-office himself. I met a gentleman a short time ago who told me of his finding the editor with his hand-cart wheel stuck in a hole, and he helped him out.

“One of the pleasantest of my labors has been the preparation of the weekly letter under the signature of ‘Irenæus.’ I was a contributor to the ‘Observer’ under this signature three years before I came into it, and there have been very few weeks since I began when that name has not appeared. To the best of my recollection it has never been omitted once on account of illness, though the letters have sometimes been written in bed. The wonder, however, is greater that the readers have not become sick and tired of them and begged to be relieved.

“In 1840 the ‘Observer’ was published in the Morse Building, on the corner of Nassau and Beekman streets. I had a bed in the fifth story and Mr. Morse slept on the sixth story, and Prof. S. F. B. Morse had a room built on the roof, where the first daguerreotypes in this country were made. He introduced the art. In 1858 we moved across the way into the Potter Building, from which we removed in 1882 without standing upon the order of our going.

“During these years my relations with all in the employment of the paper have been uniformly pleasant. I have never had a falling out, a misunderstanding, or a cross word with any of them. The foremen, Mr. Brown and Mr. Cunningham, and the assistant foreman, Alfred Harris (the last two perished in the fire), were my warm personal friends. At no former period was the paper so ably manned, nor so comfortably and con-

veniently provided for. We are all proud of it; each one of us is determined to do his work, whatever it is, just as well as he can, cheerfully as unto God, whose we are.

"We old men, my brother and I, have served our time and are fairly entitled to our discharge. The younger men are well prepared to take our places. Let us all be faithful to the end, and for one I ask no better epitaph, than each of us may earn, — 'HE HELPED TO MAKE THE "NEW YORK OBSERVER."'"



**Part Second.**

RESIDENCE IN NEWARK.

1840 — 1850.



## Part Second.

### RESIDENCE IN NEWARK.

1840 — 1850.

DR. PRIME'S autobiographical notes ended with his removal to New York City in 1840, to enter upon his duties as editor of the "New York Observer." After a few months he made a home in Newark, N. J., about ten miles from the city of New York, to which he came daily for several years. His miscellaneous papers contain many personal reminiscences of this period. In a private journal he wrote as follows:—

NEW YORK, Dec. 4, 1876.

General Joseph R. Hawley addressed the Science and Art Association this evening; the audience was very large and intelligent, and the address very entertaining and instructive; subject, "The International Exhibition." To make the arrangements and the occasion a success cost me so much care, labor, and fatigue, that I resolved not to undertake the same thing again. I have given a vast amount of time and toil to such things for the public good, but I must leave such works now to younger men. It is with me a serious question, — I have discussed it often and anxiously with myself, — whether I have not given up too much time to religious, literary, and philanthropic labors outside of my daily duties to the "New York Observer." I was led into such an active

and miscellaneous life when I first came into the paper in 1840 and went to Newark, N. J., to reside. There, in a small city, I took a deep interest in the Sabbath-school work and was superintendent of the Third Presbyterian Church school nearly nine years. There I entered ardently into the public-school work, and was elected trustee, being put on both party tickets, and receiving every vote in the ward but one or two. I was one of the founders of the City Library and spent a vast amount of time and labor, in connection with William A. Whitehead and others, in its establishment. Dr. L. A. Smith used to salute me with the question, "Well, how are your public enterprises?"

And so it has gone on ever since; and these associations have increased upon me in numbers and extent until they furnish employment enough for my whole time, had I no other work to do. And yet I am able to affirm with a good conscience that I have never neglected one duty or diverted one hour due to the "Observer," but have daily given to it all the time, strength, and thought that I ought to have given to it if I had nothing else to do. The only doubt is as to the matter of health. As I devote the first part of every day to the paper, it may be that the other part should be given to exercise and relaxation in the open air. This I have not done, and perhaps, now that old age is approaching (I am sixty-four), I may not be as able to work as I would have been had I done one thing only these past thirty-six years.

As a member of the congregation of the Third Presbyterian Church of Newark, Dr. Prime was closely associated with its pastor, the Rev. Horatio N. Brinsmade,



D.D. When Dr. Brinsmade died at the age of eighty, Dr. Prime thus wrote of their former intimacy : —

“What a tide of emotion rushed in as I remember the years of our daily companionship, while he was pastor and I led the Sabbath-school. The friendship was warm, tender, and holy; as free from dross as human friendship can be; cemented by the common love we had for Christ, His Church, and especially the lambs of His flock. For them we labored hand in hand, and great was our joy and reward.

“Eighty years! Fourscore years of usefulness, devotion, holy living and active Christian benevolence. For, like his Master, he went about doing good. His power in the ministry was in pastoral work. It is not probable that any church ever had a pastor more nearly perfect than he. He was a good, not a great preacher, except as goodness is often the greatest *greatness*. Warm, earnest, drenched with Scripture, from a heart full of tenderness and love, so that every hearer knew the preacher ‘yearned to do him good.’

“Himself a disciple in the school of suffering, taught by the Man of Sorrows, he was a son of consolation to them who mourned. In every household of his charge he ministered in affliction, and his people, especially the children of his people, died in his arms. Just here I could speak of scenes that he and I will talk over together when we and ours are sitting on the banks of the river that flows from the throne of the Lamb! Hallowed memories! Tears thirty years ago now flowing again, while his are all wiped away by the hand of Infinite Love!

“Children would stop in their play to take his hand as he passed along the street; and there is nothing in

the description of the village pastor of Goldsmith more beautiful than was daily revealed in the walk and conversation of this good shepherd. He was able to give money to those who had need of it, for his own habits were exceedingly simple, almost severe, and his income ample. It was freely spent upon the poor in his own flock, and in the ends of the world. The father of many orphans, he was as the Lord is to them whom father and mother have left behind when going home to heaven.

“So have I seen a peaceful meadow-stream winding its way among green fields, and trees planted by the water-course, verdure and flower and fruit revealing its life-giving power. It made no noise. It was often hid from sight by the wealth of overhanging branches, but it was a river of water of life to the valley it blessed. Like unto such a stream is the life of my departed friend. This day the garden of the Lord is glad for him; his whole course of eighty years may be traced by the fruit and flower and joy which rose into being along his path.”

Dr. Prime read before the Historical Society of the State of New Jersey, May 21, 1885, a “sketch” of the life and character of the Hon. William A. Whitehead, who died at his home in Perth Amboy, Aug. 18, 1884. Of his early association with this accomplished Christian gentleman he says in this address:—

“The Newark Library Association, its building, and its books will remain as one of the most conspicuous memorials of the energy and intelligent public spirit of Mr. Whitehead. In the year 1846 several gentlemen fond of books and interested in the diffusion of useful knowledge were in the habit of going to New York from Newark daily in the railroad train. One of them remarked to another, ‘I have some five or six hundred

books, and I purpose to give them for a circulating library in Newark.' They agreed to make a similar contribution. We submitted the idea to Mr. Whitehead, who enlarged the scope of the suggestion; and when we brought in other counsellors and agreed upon a joint club association, Mr. Whitehead gave himself to the work and prosecuted it to complete success. We called personally on scores of business men to secure their subscriptions. Mr. Whitehead has written: 'It was a labor requiring great devotion admitting of no relaxation. It was with pertinacity of purpose that in all weathers, regardless of rebuffs, we would seek out those who we thought ought to favor the enterprise, and argue with them to remove their objections to contribute to the fund.'

At the opening of the Hall of the Newark Library Association, Feb. 21, 1848, Dr. Prime, then the vice-president, delivered the address, which was published by order of the directors.

Among the leading citizens of Newark with whom Dr. Prime was associated in literary and benevolent works was the Hon. William B. Kinney, then editor of the Newark "Daily Advertiser." At the time of Mr. Kinney's death in 1880 Dr. Prime wrote the following recollections of his "friend of forty years:"—

"In the year of our Lord 1841 I became first acquainted with Mr. Kinney. He was then forty years old; I was less than thirty. Our pursuits and tastes were similar. We were soon intimate friends, have been ever since, and I trust will be forever.

"He attracted my attention and fascinated me with his wondrous facility in conversation, the wide range of his reading and observation, his sympathy with everything that had life, and his genuine love for the beautiful and true. I soon learned from him and others that he was descended, on both sides of his

family, in a line distinguished for its talents, position, and influence ; that he at first was designed for a military career, but his love of letters led to his return from West Point ; that he studied under the instruction of the late Dr. John Ford, having the late Rev. Drs. Hay and Cox as his fellow-students ; that in 1825 he was in the city of New York, where his genius, versatile and omnivorous, expended itself in the study of law and medicine ; that he was one of the founders of the Mercantile Library, now one of the great ornaments and benefactions of the city, as he was afterwards one of the founders of the Newark Library. While in New York he made a public profession of religion, and began the study of theology, with a view to the ministry.

“ Having ancestral property and associations in Newark, N. J., he went to that city, and became identified with its interests, grew with its growth, was the organ of its people, the only journalist in it for many years, and made a journal that was an honor to the town, and compelled attention not in the State of New Jersey only, but over the country. This soon made him the confidential associate of the rising and leading men of the day. Statesmen were his friends, such as Theodore Frelinghuysen, Samuel L. Southard, Chief-Justice Hornblower, R. F. Stockton, Chief-Justice Green, and Winfield Scott.

“ Ralph Waldo Emerson was visiting him when for the first time I met that distinguished philosopher. Mr. Kinney’s children were playing on the floor, and he remarked to Mr. Emerson, ‘They are just at the interesting age ;’ to which Mr. Emerson responded, ‘And at what age are children not interesting ? ’ ”

“ When General Taylor was elected to the Presidency of the United States, Mr. Kinney was appointed the American Minister resident at the court of Sardinia, the government which was afterwards extended over the whole of Italy. His fellow-citizens gave him a public dinner on the eve of his departure, and in some remarks of mine on that occasion I commended to his special interest the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont, hard

by the city of Turin, where he was to reside near the court of Victor Emanuel. Mr. Kinney was happy in remembering the charge. He found General Beckwith there, and with that distinguished friend of the Vaudois, Mr. Kinney served that interesting people. He was accustomed to say pleasantly that he was an '*ordained minister* to the Waldenses.'

"In 1853, while he was residing in Florence, I was his guest a month. A young gentleman from Newark, son of the late William Rankin, Esq., was my travelling companion, and was attacked with severe illness at the hotel where he was lodged. His brain was affected and physicians told us he would not recover. Night after night Mr. Kinney and I took turns in watching; every night, in the silence and darkness of the town, Mr. Kinney walked half a mile to the river Arno, crossed it, came to the hotel, and took my place by the sick boy's side, and I returned in the same way to his house; at last it was evident he could live but a few hours at most, and we kept our vigil together. We sat on either side, on the bed, each of us holding a hand of the dying; we talked to him of friends at home, of his young companions there; of the Saviour and of heaven. He did not know of what we spoke. Then, as the slow, sad hours wore on, we talked to one another of the mystery of dying, of death and the great beyond, and in the presence of that awful angel whose work no wit nor arm can hinder, we sat until he had finished what he came to do. All the tenderness of Mr. Kinney's nature appeared in his kindness to this youth during his sickness, and in the care with which he ministered to his remains at his burial and after they were laid in the beautiful cemetery of Florence, where Mrs. Browning, and our great artist Powers, and many other sons and daughters of genius, found their last bed after life's struggles were over.

"During this visit I was in Mr. Kinney's parlor one evening, with Mrs. Browning and Mrs. Kinney, congenial poets and friends, with Powers and Gould and other artists, — a brilliant company. A question in religion came up in the midst of our

conversation, when one of the party avowed himself an unbeliever, and with an air of confident triumph said, 'I will not believe anything that I cannot understand.' Mr. Kinney broke the silence that ensued by asking, 'Will you tell us, sir, what you do understand?' And then followed one of his tornadoes of conversational eloquence or parlor discourse, in which he demonstrated the utter human inability to understand the simplest phenomena, which nevertheless we intelligently believe.

"On his return to his native land, Mr. Kinney did not resume his life-labor in connection with the 'Newark Daily Advertiser,' but devoted his time and thought to the preparation and arrangement of the material he had for many years been accumulating for a history of Tuscany and the Medici family. By and by his health failed him, and a shadow of great darkness obscured the brightness of his splendid intellectual powers. He had been the most gifted person in the art of conversation with whom it has been my good fortune to meet in any profession or in any land.

"Only within a few months of the end of his life on earth did it please our Heavenly Father to command the light to shine out of darkness, and to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ to the heart and mind of this remarkable man. He was eighty years old. His physical health, long enfeebled by age and disease, seemed to be reinvigorated. Among the mountains where he felt the strength of the hills, the mind that had often been in wandering mazes lost resumed its normal course, and he became as a child in his acceptance of the love of God in the person of His Son Jesus Christ. To those near him, he expressed his sweet confidence in that Saviour who had been the guide of his youth, from whom he had erred and strayed, and to whose feet he now returned in peace."

The Rev. Nicholas Murray, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Elizabethtown, N. J., was one of

the clergy of the vicinity with whom Dr. Prime formed a life-long friendship. Born an Irishman and a Roman Catholic, Dr. Murray was familiar from earliest childhood, with the spirit and practice of the system which he had renounced under evangelical influences. After he had been settled in Elizabethtown fourteen years, he published the first series of those controversial letters which made his pseudonyme "Kirwan" famous throughout the religious reading world. His "Memoirs" were prepared as a labor of love by Dr. Prime and published in 1862. In the chapter on "Dr. Murray as an author," he says: —

"In the maturity of his powers, and firmly established in his charge, he looked back with painful solicitude upon the church of his fathers, and his soul yearned, as did the soul of the apostle, for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh who were yet under the bondage of Rome. With an earnestness of purpose and intensity of zeal that few can understand and appreciate, he resolved to make one effort to open the eyes of his countrymen and his former brethren to the danger of the errors by which they were led captive, and with God's good help, to deliver them. We have the means of knowing that he set himself at this work with prayerful deliberation, and pursued it through months and years of most laborious study. Before putting pen to paper, he unfolded to me the plan and purpose of his work, and the feelings with which he was impelled to its execution. I urged him to go forward, aided him in finding the books that he needed to substantiate his positions, and begged him not to allow anything to divert him from the holy purpose he had formed."

It was soon determined that his work should take the form of a series of articles in the "New York Observer,"

and for the purpose of more immediately securing attention, and giving them the additional zest of personal correspondence, that they should be addressed as letters to the Rt. Rev. John Hughes, D.D., Bishop of New York.

The first series consisted of twelve letters, in the early part of 1847. Their immediate publication in book form followed, and tens of thousands were sold with great rapidity. They were translated into German. They were republished abroad. "It is certainly safe and just to say that no writings on the Roman Catholic question have excited so much attention since the Reformation, or have been so widely read by the masses of the people." Other series followed which, though not so widely read by the Protestant community were even abler and more effective than the first. It was characteristic of Dr. Prime that in the first decade of his life as an editor, he should introduce a champion of the Protestant faith whose words aroused the attention of great numbers on both sides of the Atlantic. Dr. Murray died at Elizabethtown, N. J., in the midst of his usefulness, February 4, 1861, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

Although Dr. Prime was laboriously occupied with editorial duties during the ordinary working hours of every day, and ardently interested in the religious, educational, and benevolent enterprises of the city of Newark, his early morning and evening hours were spent in literary work which resulted in several useful volumes, published by the American Sunday-school Union and Robert Carter and Brother. His health was delicate, but his buoyant spirit sustained him throughout months of incessant and absorbing occupation. In this he was



no example for others, because his facility for both literary and executive work was so remarkable that his exertion, though continuous, was entirely free from that friction and exhaustion common to many of the most successful. Bereavement first visited his household in the death of the youngest of his four children, Edward Irenæus, in October, 1849. In the following year Dr. Prime removed to Brooklyn, Long Island.



**Part Third.**

RESIDENCE IN BROOKLYN.

1850 — 1858.



## Part Third.

### RESIDENCE IN BROOKLYN.

1850-1858.

AMONG other inducements to settle in Brooklyn at the time Dr. Prime left Newark in 1850, was an invitation to supply the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church, of which the Rev. Melancthon W. Jacobus, D. D., was pastor, and who at this time was travelling abroad. Though Dr. Prime had retired from the pastorate because his throat was not equal to the continuous labor of the pulpit, he had been able during the last ten years to speak in public at intervals, and was now well known as an impressive occasional preacher. His sermons were written and read, always interesting and forcible, often pathetic and persuasive, never lacking in the earnestness and directness which were characteristic of his manhood. His natural buoyancy and ready wit never betrayed him into anything incongruous or unworthy of the pulpit. His conversation and extempore efforts on ordinary occasions shone with the brightness of his humor. Many who were never in his presence but for a few moments remember them as full of life and light. For many years it was his pleasure to lecture occasionally for the benefit of worthy objects. In one of those lectures, which was literally packed with entertaining anecdotes and reminiscences, he remarked thus on wit in the pulpit:—

“Because very successful preachers sometimes say things that make people laugh in the midst of the sermon, it is common for unthinking people to reason that it is wise and well to mix up the gospel with fun. But these witticisms are out of place, are flies in the ointment.

‘T is pitiful

To court a grin when you should woo a soul.’

“Let us be serious in a serious cause, and be funny in the time and place for fun. Still we must not be too hard on all ministers who make fun in the pulpit. There ’s no knowing what one might do if one could. The excellent Sherlock remonstrated with the excellent South for his irreverence, saying that the pulpit was no place for wit and humor. South replied: ‘O dear Dr. Sherlock, had it pleased the Lord to make you a wit, what would you have done?’ Men who have no temptations must be very gentle in their treatment of their brethren who are so unfortunate as to be witty. There is danger on the other side in making too much effort to conceal the natural disposition and to warp the natural play of the intellect.

“The Rev. Thomas Fairfield lived in New Jersey in those good old times when the Tennents were the godly pastors of New Brunswick and Freehold. He was an excellent man, with a loving, cheerful heart, overflowing with good-will, with a smile and kindly word for every man he met, and in the pulpit his good-humor shone in his face and in all his speech. His wit, always kindly, was as quick as the light and just as cheery. He had long heard of the holy Mr. Tennent at Freehold, and of the wonderful power of that devout and godly man. He went down and spent a few days with him, heard him preach and pray, was deeply impressed, and went home to be another man, — to be like Mr. Tennent! The Sabbath came, and with a solemn countenance he met his people at the door of the church; he preached and prayed as if the funeral of all his friends was in progress, and came down from the pulpit to take his elders’ hands as though the sorrows and sins of his people

were a burden on his soul. Deacon Nutman went at him : 'Are you well, Mr. Fairfield?' 'Very well, through mercy,' said the pastor. 'And all the family?' 'All well, thank the Lord,' with a sigh. The deacon pursued the inquiry, and finding that nothing had occurred during the week to depress the spirits of the worthy minister, he broke out upon him in these blunt words : 'Well, I tell you what it is, Mr. Fairfield, if nothing's happened to make you feel bad, then the devil's in you, — that's all.' Mr. Fairfield felt it instantly, and, coming to himself, gave his hand to his good friend, saying : 'You are right, Deacon Nutman ; the devil was in me, but you have cast him out. I was trying to be like Mr. Tennent, but I will be myself after this, and nobody else.'

"This was a sudden cure, and it was thorough. Mr. Fairfield went on with his work, and did it well, a cheerful, happy, useful pastor, rejoicing with them that did rejoice and weeping with those in tears."

Dr. Prime's health, which from his earliest youth had been delicate and precarious, was so seriously impaired in 1853 that he arranged for a season of rest and travel in Europe and the East. He made his first ocean transit by the sailing-ship "Devonshire" (April 7, 1853), which, after a pleasant voyage of seventeen days, reached Portsmouth April 24, 1853. First-class steamers have often made longer passages than this. There was much besides its brevity and weather to make the voyage memorable to those who formed the company of about thirty cabin passengers, several of whom were cultivated ladies, and five of whom were clergymen. More than thirty years after, the Rev. John G. Hall, D. D., of Cleveland, Ohio, gave in the "New York Observer" (Aug. 20, 1885) the following recollections of "Irenæus on shipboard :"—

“It was thirty-two years ago the 7th of April last that I first saw the Rev. Dr. S. Irenæus Prime. He stood on the pier at Peck Slip with a group of others, who were waiting for the tug to transfer them to the deck of the good ship ‘Devonshire,’ anchored in the stream, and bound for London. As I approached, the late Rev. Dr. Horatio N. Brinsmade, of Newark, who was talking with him, turned and said to me, in his customary pleasant, naïve manner: ‘Why, you here! Where are you going?’ And then he introduced me to ‘his friend Mr. Prime, of the “Observer.”’ And the endorsement of the good man lasted with us both.

“Dr. Prime was clad in a dark-colored Ulster overcoat reaching to his feet, and looked like an invalid, as indeed he was. I was much like him in the latter respect, and on this account was much in his company on board the ship, especially in the second cabin, midships, where a stove had been kept up for the delicate ones, and where Mr. Richard C. Morse, who was also one of our passengers, frequently entertained us by his magnificent reading, which gave me my first and only acquaintance with ‘Bleak House.’

“The ‘Devonshire’ was a noble ship of the Griswold Line of London Packets, and manned by five officers besides the captain, twenty-five seamen, five stewards, and two cooks. Captain Hovey, the commander, was the son of Rev. Mr. Hovey, the life-long pastor of the Congregational Church at Essex (Petipang Society), — a parish formerly of Saybrook, Conn., — and though bred to the sea, was bred also a gentleman. Long after we sailed with him he was lost aboard a wrecked steamer on the coast of Georgia during a storm of tremendous violence.

“Our first Sabbath out was so rough and blustering that public religious services were impracticable, but the next Sabbath proving more favorable, we were all assembled on deck for the interesting exercises. Dr. Prime and Rev. Jonathan Crane, of Attleboro’, Mass., were our leaders, although we all took part in the hearing, singing, praying, and joy of the occasion. One



young man I noticed in particular, — the carpenter of the ship, — who showed us his bright, intelligent, interested face, as he hung over us from the shrouds, where he had perched himself. Alas! before the dawn of the next Sabbath he was drowned in the depths of the sea, the weeds of which had begun to gather about his head. He was a German, returning to his fatherland, where his expectant parents were longingly awaiting him. And none on ship mourned him more sincerely than Dr. Prime; as he himself said in a letter soon after, ‘My heart had gone out to him, and in return for some acts of kindness he had done to me I was thinking what present I should make him before going ashore, when, at the instant, the shout was made, and this noble fellow, the pride of the men, was struggling in the pitiless waters!’

“The sailors have a superstitious saying among them, that ‘a parson aboard makes a bad voyage.’ But although there were five of us of that description, yet our voyage was remarkable for its general prosperity, pleasantness (aside from the death just alluded to), and its brevity. The ship did not alter her course from Sandy Hook to the British Channel. Of the five clergymen referred to, the first to leave us for the eternal world was the Rev. Mr. Righter, of Parsippany, New Jersey, who became the very efficient, enthusiastic, and valued agent of the American Bible Society among the soldiers of the Crimean war, and who died there in that distant field. The second was the Rev. Jonathan Crane, who died in his pulpit a few years since, at Middletown, N. Y. And now the third is our much lamented Dr. Prime. The fourth, Rev. George E. Hill, son of the very venerable Henry Hill, Esq., so long ‘Treasurer of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, is still in the ministry. A number of other passengers, about thirty in all, agreeable and interesting in their companionship, among whom may be mentioned Mr. and Mrs. John W. Harper, of New York, then on their wedding trip, Mr. J. J. Rankin, of Newark, N. J., then a recent graduate of Princeton, who died the same

year at Florence, and a daughter of Mr. Richard Morse, — filled the main cabin with a circle who remembered one another with pleasure for a long time afterward.

“Of those evening gatherings, before the state-rooms were resorted to, Dr. Prime was the life and soul, introducing topics of conversation, and suggesting various simple entertainments for the passing hours. And as mesmerism was then the rage of the day, I remember how he skilfully entertained us all, and bewildered some of us, myself among the latter number, by his adroit simulations of those stealthy tricks. He afterwards kindly opened to me the *arcana* of the operation.

“The last evening we were to be together a special service was arranged, at which were toasts and speeches appropriate to the occasion, of which Dr. Prime seemed to be the principal getter-up and manager, he himself responding by request to two of the sentiments proposed. The innocent witticism of one of them, ‘Our men of *letters*; may they *write her* if they do not come back,’ responded to by Rev. Mr. Righter, seems now to have been unintentionally prophetic of his career, since he never did come back, but died at Diarbekir. Another of them also: ‘The future of our travels; “the world is all before us where to choose, and Providence our guide,”’ responded to by Mr. J. J. Rankin, seems now singularly foreshadowing of that afflictive Providence which had arranged that he should die at Florence, far away from parents and native land. On the other hand, how kind the Providence that caused Dr. Prime, an intimate friend of the Rankin family, to be present at the dying bed of this young man in that distant city, to minister to him in his last moments and to see to his burial. Such striking contacts of one life with another here in this world may, peradventure, have still more striking counterparts in the world that is hereafter. ‘Seest thou these things? Thou shalt see greater things than these.’

“Landing at Portsmouth Sabbath morning, April 24, after seventeen days’ intercourse, the ‘five American clergymen’

attended public worship together, and sent to the pulpit a note of public thanks, penned by Dr. Prime, 'for deliverance from the dangers of the deep.' Many pleasant interviews have I had since our ocean voyage of 1853 with him to whom these reminiscences mainly refer; but it is with a peculiar pleasure that I recall those first days and scenes of our acquaintance, when the scant area of the 'Devonshire' was all the accessible world to us, whose inmates were always near at hand for a walk, a talk, a song, or a prayer."

Dr. Prime's subsequent journey was pleasant and prosperous, excepting one adventure and disappointment in the Holy Land. In one of his published letters he thus tells the story:—

"While at Constantinople the Hon. George P. Marsh, United States Minister in Turkey, warned me not to attempt to travel in Palestine. The Crimean war was then coming on. The Arab population in Syria and Palestine were breaking out into lawless violence, and no Frank or European was safe. But we believed the reports exaggerated, and determined to take the risks. Coming by ship to Beyrut, we journeyed with tents and horses to Sidon and Tyre and Nazareth, and by this time had fearful evidence of the unsettled state of the country. At Beyrut the Rev. S. H. Calhoun, and at Sidon Dr. William H. Thomson, had joined our party, consisting of Mr. Groesbeck of Cincinnati, Rev. George E. Hill of Boston, Rev. Chester N. Righter of New Jersey, and myself. At Nazareth we engaged an armed guard to escort us to Nablous, the ancient Shechem. Here we heard such fearful reports of the Bedouins burning villages, robbing and murdering the people, that we came to a halt, and were virtually shut up two or three days. The valiant guard declined to go forward; our muleteers sent us word that they would go no farther. We applied to the governor of Nablous for an escort, but he could do nothing for us. Our

dragoman proved to be the greatest coward of the party. We were compelled to be patient, and improved the time by studying the objects of sacred interest in and around this famous old town.

“ Now, Jacob’s well was there. There is no spot in Palestine more definitely settled upon as the original Jacob’s well than this. The Bible account of its location is very clear. The great value placed upon wells in early times and the easy tradition that would preserve the name of so important a possession leaves us in no doubt as to the locality. Our party was under the care of the dragoman. A lad and a poor fellow from the town hung on as camp-followers, running behind the party, who were all mounted. Not thinking of any danger in the immediate vicinity of Nablous, we left our pistols at our lodgings, and there was not a weapon among us. This was just as well, for we could not have made any effectual resistance when attacked, and would only have provoked the enemy to destroy us if we had fired on them. It was a pleasant half-hour’s ride from the gate of the city to the well.

“ When we arrived we found a heap of rubbish about the well, which was covered with a stone. This we removed, and found that it concealed the opening through a wooden platform, and the mouth of the well was two or three feet on one side of the opening. Mr. Righter and I crept under the platform, and proceeded with a cord and weight to measure the depth of the well. Just as the weight touched the bottom the cry was raised that Bedouins were coming. We tied a knot in the string to keep the measure, which was seventy-five feet, and came out. The party were all mounted and anxious to be off; for a party of Arabs were riding toward us in single file, with their long spears at rest and guns slung over their shoulders. The better part of valor was for us, unarmed and on horseback, to get away from the enemy as speedily as possible. Our dragoman proved indeed our leader in flight; for instead of keeping between us and the enemy, and holding a parley with them if he could, he

was off like a shot to the city, and left us to our fate. As my horse had been selected for his gentleness and easy gait, without regard to speed, the rest of the party soon left me behind. The savages halted, and one of their number came on to overtake me. Looking back over my shoulder, I saw him coming in full leap upon me, with his spear balanced and ready to run it through my back. At this instant Mr. Righter, who had gone on ahead of me, looked around, and seeing the imminent danger to which I was exposed, wheeled about and dashed between me and the savage. The spear hit him in his side, went through his overcoat and underclothing, made a flesh wound just below the ribs, and glanced off. Had he been in the position that I was in it would have gone directly into his body and killed him without a doubt. Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Thomson rode back to us, and addressing the Arab in his own language, to his great astonishment, and calling him friend, they seemed to shake his purpose. He ordered us to stay where we were while he went off to his company. But we did not obey orders, and as soon as he was gone we went the other way with accelerated velocity, and did not look back till we were under the walls of the city. The two camp-followers fell into the hands of the enemy, were beaten and stripped of their scant clothing, which we, however, made up to them. Once more in my lodgings, I examined the wound of my friend Righter, cleansed it thoroughly with cold water, dressed it with sticking-plaster, and sought to keep him quiet after the excitement. His cot was next to mine, and the night following this eventful day I often put out my hand, which he would take in his hand and press it in token of the love that had prompted him to offer his life for his friend; and greater love hath no man than this. Neither of us could sleep that night. If I dozed a moment, that big black savage, horse, spear, gun and all, would dash into the room, and sleep would fly from me as I did from him a few hours before. It was some time before my nerves resumed their normal condition. History has made some heroic friendships immortal, and we know

that soldiers have sacrificed themselves for their commanders ; but no story tells of purer and nobler self-sacrifice than this. One minute more and that cruel spear would have gone into my back and come out of my breast. He rode between it and me and received it in his side.

“ Dr. Calhoun was then a missionary in Mount Lebanon. He afterwards came to this country, and at my house met a hundred ministers and other friends. He was dying then, and his soul lived with God while he was yet in the flesh ; he had relatives to whom he went, and then he slept in the Lord. Mr. Thomson is the son of the missionary of Sidon, the distinguished author of ‘The Land and the Book.’ The son came to this city, and is now a great physician, and the instructor of that wonderful Bible-class in Association Hall. Mr. Groesbeck died in this city. The Rev. Mr. Hill is an honored pastor in New England. Not long after he returned from that journey he sent for me to come to New Hampshire and make him the happy husband of a lovely bride. I went. His son is now an assistant in my office, and writes in the next room to mine. And Righter, whom you call ‘the hero of Jacob’s well,’ — Mr. Hill and he came home with me, and the American Bible Society prevailed on him to go back to the Levant in its service. The Crimean war was now raging. He went to the Crimea ; was kindly entertained by Lord Raglan, the English general in command ; visited the wounded, ministered to the dying, pushed his way into Assyria, and at Diarbekir, on the banks of the Tigris, after fighting bravely with fever, in the midst of tender, loving, Christian friends, he breathed away his noble soul.”

In the “New York Observer,” of May 19, 1853, is published the first of those series of “Irenæus Letters” which continued, with few interruptions, every week for more than thirty years. It described the voyage in the “Devonshire” from New York to Portsmouth, and subsequent letters continued the narrative of his tour during

many months. This series of letters was included in the two volumes entitled, "Travels in Europe and East" (12mo, 1855), published by Harper and Brothers. In the preface to this work Dr. Prime says :—

"My year abroad was one of almost unmingled enjoyment. Leaving home a wretched invalid, with but a faint prospect of returning to a grave, I gathered health and strength with every month of travel. In every land new friends or old ones gave me a glad greeting ; young and ardent companions hung on my steps, ministered to my wants with filial kindness, strengthened me in weakness, sheltered me in hours of danger, and endeared themselves to me by devotion never to be repaid."

Dr. Prime's church connection in Brooklyn was with the Presbyterian Church under the pastoral care of the Rev. Henry J. Van Dyke, D. D., successor to the Rev. Melancthon W. Jacobus. Here, as in Newark, he was a faithful parishioner, cordially co-operating with the pastor in all that concerned the welfare of the congregation. His interest in education was especially manifest in his association with the foundation and development of the Packer Institute for Young Ladies, under the care of Professor Crittenden, and afterward of his successor, Professor Eaton.

About this time the pulpit of Brooklyn was remarkable, as it has been ever since, for the wide reputation of its preachers. Though the Rev. Dr. Samuel Hanson Cox had by this time withdrawn from the active duties of his pastorate, he was a resident of the city, and was frequently heard in the pulpit of his former charge and on public occasions of general interest. Among many reminiscences of this extraordinary man which are recorded by Dr. Prime are the following :—

“ One of the most brilliant intellects of the American pulpit passed into another sky when Dr. Cox was glorified. More learned men, with more logical and far more nicely balanced minds, more useful ministers and leaders, have lived in his day ; but we have had no one with his blazing genius, bold and dazzling eloquence, range of imagination, fertility of illustration, astonishing memory, exuberant wit, rapid association of ideas, stores of facts and words from classic authors, and the faculty of expression that combined the sturdy, grotesque eccentricities of Carlyle with the flow and beauty of Macaulay.

“ I was by his side on the platform when he was moderator of the New-School Presbyterian General Assembly in Philadelphia. He was offering the prayer in the morning, and in the midst of it he said : ‘ O Lord Jesus Christ, thou art the *ne plus ultra* of our desire, the *sine qua non* of our faith, and the *ultima Thule* of our hope.’

“ Yet, so natural to him was this form of expression that he had no recollection of it afterward. His friend, Dr. E. F. Hatfield was by his side also, and remembers the remarkable words.

“ It was in this same assembly that a member from Ohio cast reflections, in debate, on ‘ decorated divines,’ when Dr. Cox called him to order, remarking with gentle humor, ‘ The brother should not speak disrespectfully of doctors of divinity ; he does not know what he may come to himself.’

“ When Williams College made Mr. Cox Dr. Cox he declined the degree in a characteristic letter to the ‘ New York Observer,’ ridiculing the title and condemning the distinction. My predecessor, Sidney E. Morse, published the letter, of two solid columns. That is the letter in which occurs the phrase ‘ semi-lunar fardels,’ meaning ‘ D.D.,’ the resemblance of the letter D to a half-moon suggesting this play. But by and by Dr. Cox thought better of it, and was then heartily sorry that he ever wrote the foolish letter. But, what is even more remarkable, he blamed Mr. Morse for printing the letter, saying that he (Mr.



Morse) ought 'to have had sense enough to decline its publication.' Mr. Morse often laughed heartily with me over the eccentricity of Dr. Cox's mind in that matter.

"His memory held whole pages and volumes of poetry and prose, which he could recite with elegance and correctness, astonishing and delighting the favored hearer. Cowper's 'Task,' Scott's 'Marmion,' and Milton were favorites. His memory of dates and names appeared conspicuously in his lectures on Biblical chronology, and the way in which he handled 'Tiglath Pileser' and his contemporaries would put the modern lecturer to confusion if he were to attempt an imitation. I asked him to come over from Brooklyn to lecture in a course I was conducting, but he refused point-blank, because when he had gone on a former occasion the people did not attend! I assured him there would be no lack of hearers, and he finally yielded to my gentle blandishments. We walked together to the church where he was to speak, going early to put up some maps for illustration. Though it was half an hour before the time to begin, we met thousands coming away, and the vestry and aisles were so packed that we could scarcely get in. As we were struggling up he said to me, 'This lecture has been well *primed*.' To which I, 'And it will go off well, too;' and it did. He discoursed on Babylon. Thirty-five years have passed since that night; but the grandeur of the scene, those hanging gardens, the palaces, streets, and battlements of Babylon the Great rise now in lustrous glory on the memory.

"How much I do regret that my dear friend Dr. Adams, whose grave is not yet grass-grown, did not comply with my request to write out the introduction, which he often related in my company, to the speech of Dr. Cox in Exeter Hall when he there represented the American Bible Society before the British and Foreign. Dr. Adams knew it word for word, and that it is in print I do not know. Dr. Cox arrived in London, and in Exeter Hall after the meeting was begun, and a tirade against America greeted him as he entered. As the speaker sat down

Dr. Cox was announced as the delegate from the American Society. The terrible denunciation just delivered had excited the indignation of the audience, and Dr. Cox was received with respectful coldness; but his splendid figure, his gallant, courteous, commanding presence, his irresistible smile, lightened instantly the gloom of the hall, and conciliated the audience. He said something like this:—

“‘My lord, twenty days ago I was taken by the tug “Hercules” from the quay in New York to the good ship “Samson,” lying in the stream; thus, my lord, going from strength to strength,—from mythology to Scripture. By the good hand of the Lord I was brought to your shores just in time to reach this house and to enter in the midst of the burning denunciations of my beloved country that have fallen from the lips of the gentleman who has just sat down. He has reproached that country for the existence of slavery, which I abhor as much as he. But he did not tell you, my lord, that when we revolted from your government one of the reasons alleged was the fact that your king had forced that odious institution upon us in spite of our remonstrances, and that the original sin rests with you and your fathers.’ Having adduced the well-known facts of history to prove this position, he continued, ‘And now, my lord, instead of indulging in mutual reproaches, I propose that the gentleman shall be Shem and I will be Japheth, and taking the mantle of charity, we will walk backward and cover the nakedness of our common father.’

“The effect was instantaneous and overwhelming; the day was won; and a more popular orator than Dr. Cox was not heard during the anniversaries.

“The great picture that was made to represent the formation of the Evangelical Alliance in London in 1846 has as its central figure the person of Dr. Cox addressing the Assembly. His speech on that occasion is considered by those who heard it as the greatest of his whole life. Much opposition was made by the European delegates to the insertion of the doctrine of future

punishment into the platform when forming. The Americans insisted upon its introduction. Dr. Cox was selected by them to make *the* speech in defence of their views. He spoke and conquered. Before his exhibition of the revelation of God's will in his Word, his vindication of the faith of the saints, and his vivid illustrations of the harmony and relations of the several parts of the evangelical system, the fears and unbelief of good men went down out of sight, while the glory of the Lord rose upon the minds and hearts of the council. It was a triumph of truth to be held in everlasting remembrance.

“But not in sacred eloquence only was Dr. Cox illustrious. His reading was universal, his mind cyclopedic, his tongue fluent, mellifluous, and tireless. Tap him on any subject, and the stream came bright, sparkling, refreshing, like a mountain torrent, or a meadow rivulet, or a deep, broad, majestic river, filling the listener with joy, often with amazement, always with new impressions. These sudden coruscations were the best things he did. His labored preparations were actually sometimes dull. I heard him preach two hours before the American Board at Pittsfield, Mass., and the audience were tired to exhaustion. He himself was so mortified by the failure that I pitied him. Just think of that! And yet the next day there sprang up a question in regard to Popery in the Sandwich Islands, and he went off with a philippic against the ‘Man of Sin,’ and the woman with the bad name in the Revelation, so full of argument, wit, ridicule, fact, Scripture, poetry, chronology, prophecy, and pathos that a great congregation was roused, melted, and convulsed. Such outbursts as these suggested the remark, when the November meteoric shower was first observed, that Dr. Cox's head had probably exploded.

“And something very like a meteoric shower it was when we were assembled in the Academy of Music to receive the astronomer Professor Mitchell, and listen to him on behalf of a projected observatory in Central Park. The house was filled with the most brilliant, intelligent, scientific, and cultivated au-

dience. Word was brought that sudden illness prevented the eloquent astronomer from leaving his bed. This word was sent to me by the Professor, and in despair I went to Dr. Cox on the stage, told him the distressing truth, and implored him to come to the rescue, or the occasion would be lost. The assembly joining in the request, he complied, and when the applause on his rising had subsided, he said: 'To put me in the place of such a man as Professor Mitchell is like putting a rush-light in the place of Ursa Major.' And then he proceeded to deliver a strictly astronomical discourse of three quarters of an hour that electrified the assembly, every illustration and allusion of which, including many Scripture quotations, were drawn from the science itself, as if it were the study of his life, his only study. Not one man in ten thousand would have been found equal to such an effort in such circumstances. In fact, as Mr. — has recently said that there are not more than thirty men in Boston who could have written the works of Shakespeare, I will undertake to admit that there is not one man in New York who could have made that speech.

"And thus might I run on into pages of reminiscence of this wonderful man, — the most remarkable man of the last generation in the pulpit of New York. If a merry heart is good as a medicine, how many doctors' bills Dr. Cox has saved me! What *noctes ambrosianæ* I have had with him in the fellowship of the saints whom he drew into that circle of Christian brothers known as 'X. A.' in New York! He was its founder. Its jubilee came this year, and Dr. Adams was appointed to recite its history; but he preceded the founder by a few brief weeks to a holier fellowship on high.

"I do thank God for such men, — for their friendship, for genial intercourse, nightly converse, and daily service with such servants of Christ. Their names were long since written in heaven. The earth seems dim since their light has gone out. And as I close this letter the thought comes to me with an overpowering, but also with exhilarating, almost rapturous, effect,

that this companionship will soon be renewed, and into the widened circle will come the wise and the good of all ages and all lands. That company will never break up ; that feast and flow will be everlasting."

Equally renowned as an orator was another friend and neighbor of Dr. Prime, the Rev. Dr. George W. Bethune, pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church on the Heights, Brooklyn, who died in Italy April 27, 1862. His name is mentioned with admiration and affection in Irenæus's thirtieth autobiographical "Letter." His many personal associations with this accomplished preacher, poet, and public speaker, are indicated in the "Irenæus Letter" written at the time of Dr. Bethune's burial in Greenwood, and in which it is said: —

"All the circumstances, antecedents, and surroundings made the occasion one of great sublimity and moral beauty.

"You will recall the man, his social, private, public, and religious character, and note the space he filled in the hearts of his friends, the Church, and the world. You remember his voice and manner when he preached the gospel in the pulpit, when he surpassed himself in Tripler Hall at the Madaia meeting, and offered to lay his head upon the block as a martyr in the cause of religious liberty, even the liberty of Roman Catholics, whose outrage of the principle we had met to condemn before God and man. You recall his magnificent discourse in the Academy of Music when he preached Christ crucified to the gathered thousands thronging that splendid theatre from pit to dome ; how his clear silver voice rang like a clarion through the arches, and reached and held the most distant sinner there, as he unfolded the words of his simple text, 'Do thyself no harm.' In the same place and a year or two afterward other thousands were assembled to avow their fealty to the Union, and to consecrate themselves to its salvation. It was nearly midnight when the

wearied but enthusiastic multitude caught sight of Bethune, who had come in late. His name was shouted over the house, and he would not resist the call. I never heard him speak with more popular eloquence than he did that night. Would to God his words had been heeded. 'I am no politician,' said he, 'but I will never vote for any man — no, not if he were my own brother who had lain with me in my mother's womb — on whom there rests a shadow of a suspicion of a stain of disunion.' You remember how he was carried from place to place during our religious anniversaries to speak again and again the same evening to different audiences. I have known him to address three meetings the same night, so eagerly was he sought and heard on the platform as well as in the pulpit.

"You must recall these elements in his character and these facts in his brilliant career, when thinking of his friends bearing his remains to their burial. But these are not all. You will recollect that when the hand of God touched him, and the mighty man had faltered on the high places of Israel, that he went away to a distant land to seek a new lease of life in the genial clime of Italy or to die. He thought he should die there. Not so soon; for he had large plans of usefulness that were to be worked out there, and in a letter I had from him, written the week before he died, he sought co-operation in these schemes of labor for the enlightenment of that classic, beautiful, but perverted land. And there, in Florence, the fairest city of southern Europe, in the midst of the rarest and loveliest forms and monuments of genius, taste and art — in Florence, where Galileo held converse with the heavens, and Milton found inspiration and repose communing with him and the stars — Florence, where Dante and Michael Angelo sat and admired the dome of Brunelleschi — Florence, where the masterpieces of Titian and Raphael still live, with statues that enchant the world, though the names of their makers perished with the antique peoples to whom they belonged, — there in Florence, in the midst of art that our brother's cultivated taste rejoiced in, and in that soft,

bland atmosphere that seems to be the air of immortality, there he dies. A few days before his death he had been asked to step out and see the Italian sunset, and he then remarked, 'What a land to live in or to die in!'

"You will remember that when his gentle and noble heart was still, they embalmed his form and sent it home to us that we might lay it with his sainted parents' dust. For three long months it was tossed on the sea, and we feared the bark that bore it had been lost, and our friend had found his tomb in the unfathomed caves of ocean, there to rest till the sea gives up its dead. But the winds and waves had been charged with their errand, and they brought their burden safely here. And now devout men were bearing him to his burial.

"It was at the close of a lovely September day when the procession reached Greenwood Cemetery. The tomb to which it pursued its mournful way was in the most picturesque portion of the grounds. On a hillside that slopes to a lake in the middle of which a fountain leaps and falls, surrounded by lofty forest-trees, and among them white marble monuments marking the repose of the dead, here on this hillside the procession rested, and found the open tomb. At the head of it stood Chancellor Ferris, and on either side of him the officiating ministers and the bearers, many of them the most venerable and distinguished of the clergy, in their pulpit gowns with white scarfs, their gray heads uncovered and reverently bowed as the Chancellor read the words of Holy Writ, and the body of our departed brother was lowered into the tomb, and laid with his parents, and his grandmother, Isabella Graham. The sun was just setting. Italy rarely if ever sees a more glorious sunset. Its last rays lingered in sympathy with us as we wept that the light of our friend's face and voice and love, like the sun, was going out in the darkness of the grave; but when we heard the rapturous words, 'this mortal shall put on immortality,' 'I am the resurrection and the life,' we saw him rising and soaring, not on the wings of seraphic eloquence, but clothed in white rai-

ment, with palms of triumph in his hand before the throne of God and the Lamb, a glorified body and soul, rejoicing with the Redeemer and the redeemed in his Father's house."

Dr. Prime was associated with one of Dr. Bethune's last literary works, the preparation of the memoirs of Dr. Bethune's mother, Mrs. Joanna Bethune, published by Harper and Brothers in 1863. In a prefatory note to this volume Dr. Prime says :—

"About one year before the Rev. Dr. Bethune went abroad and died he asked me to aid him in preparing a biographical sketch of his mother. He desired me to read her journals, meditations, recorded prayers, and letters, and from them to select such passages as might be thought useful if published as an appendix to the memoir. After I had completed the examination I placed the manuscripts in his hands, with the selected passages marked ; and he then wrote the memoir which is now presented to the reader. It is his last work, — a beautiful, living tribute by a gifted, affectionate son to his sainted mother. Other works of this eloquent and distinguished scholar, poet, preacher, and orator have been published, but nothing from his pen will be read with greater admiration than this simple memorial of the mother who taught him to speak.

"The extracts from the writings of Mrs. Joanna Bethune which are given as an appendix to the memoir are a rich legacy to the Church. In many respects they are not less valuable and interesting than the remains of her remarkable mother, Mrs. Isabella Graham. They exhibit a life of extraordinary activity, of deep spiritual feeling, and strong faith in the promises of God to parents for their children and children's children.

"Extending over a long series of years, these extracts, which might have been continued to fill several volumes, complete the biography written by her son, and show the mother in the midst of her incessant toil for the young, founding the Sunday-school



Union system, infant schools, the orphan asylum, and abounding in every good work, humbly seeking divine aid in the minutest and most secular duties, and, above all, praying without ceasing for the conversion of her posterity to the latest generation.

“Christian ladies will read these pages, and be stimulated and guided in noble self-denying labors for the world around them; and aged women will here find a beautiful example of holy living and dying that will comfort and cheer them in the evening of their days.

“The life of the author of this memoir remains to be written. His death, so sudden and in a far-away country, was a shock and a grief to his friends and the Christian community from which they have not yet recovered; but they will receive with mournful satisfaction these last fruits of his pen,—the yearnings of his warm heart for her with whom he is now at rest in glory.”

There were giants in those days in the pulpits of Brooklyn; some of them are still there in the fulness of their strength; but the greater number have entered into rest, and their works do follow them.

In 1858 Dr. Prime changed his residence to New York City, where during the greater part of every year he continued to reside until he was removed to the “city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”



**Part Fourth.**

RESIDENCE IN NEW YORK CITY.

1858-1885.



## Part Fourth.

### RESIDENCE IN NEW YORK CITY.

1858-1885.

DR. PRIME'S removal to New York City brought him into closer contact than ever with numerous religious, benevolent, and social activities. These were never numerous enough to prevent him from welcoming fresh opportunities to aid the cause of evangelical religion. He was interested in the deputation from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland which visited this country on a financial mission in 1859. It consisted of the Rev. Dr. Edgar, Rev. S. M. Dill, and the Rev. David Wilson, and their mission was entirely successful. On the eve of their departure, Dec. 16, 1859, they were entertained by Dr. Prime at dinner at the St. Nicholas Hotel. More than fifty personal friends were present. Addresses were made by the Irish visitors and many distinguished clergymen and laymen. Rev. Drs. S. H. Cox, William Adams, G. W. Bethune, Nicholas Murray, Joel Parker, John Thompson, and Professors S. F. B. Morse and O. M. Mitchell, Mr. Cyrus W. Field, and the Messrs. George H. and James Stuart of Philadelphia, were among the speakers.

But a few months before his death Dr. Prime made the following note in regard to this gathering: "Feb. 16, 1885, being twenty-six years since I entertained the Irish deputation at dinner. Sixty-two were invited;

fifty-two were present; thirty of the fifty-two are dead; nine of the ten absent are dead; seven of our own family were present, and all of them are living." Thus in less than thirty years nearly two thirds of this circle of friends, most of whom were in the prime of life, had passed away.

In the "New York Observer," April 5, 1860, after twenty years' editorial labor, Dr. Prime remarks:—

"We are writing in the building that stands where the Brick Church stood, itself remembered in history; but the pastor, then venerable, is only more so now (Rev. Dr. Gardiner Spring). When we first met the blessed Milnor, now the glorified, he said, 'The doctrines that I love I always find set forth and defended in the "Observer."' That beautiful and tranquil light of the Episcopal Church has set. Mason, Cone, and Knox were here with Milnor then; they are all gone now. Others have come since and departed; but the great body of clergy hold forth the word of life as they did twenty years ago. With these revolving years, increasing opportunities of observation, reflection, comparison, and experience, we become, as is natural, perhaps inevitable, more and more attached to those precious truths which have been our support and that of the Church in all ages, and never more than now. Men change, and times change, and parties and interests; but principles, like the word of God, abide forever. In an evil world good men are always aiming at reform; and the last twenty years have been the great years of reform; but when all means of human devising have been tried and failed we just have to come back to the principles of divine wisdom, find what the word of God teaches, and seek to apply it to the case in hand. So it has been;

so it will be. In all the reformations of our day no permanent good has been effected by any organization that has gone beyond or fallen behind the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. Hence with these advancing years we find the most marked effect of discussion to be an increased attachment to the essentials of Christian doctrine, an increasing conviction that in non-essentials there be liberty, and in all things charity. The motto is ancient, but never more pertinent than now. It is no longer a matter of wonder to us that others cannot see with our eyes. Good men have always differed, and will so long as all see but in part; and in clearer light than this we shall wonder at our blindness, and admire the grace that brought us through all our troubles and differences safely unto the perfect day."

Though the editor wrote thus serenely, his career from the beginning had been marked by vigorous controversy. At the very entrance upon his editorial duties he attacked the Fourierite and kindred social notions which were being favored by one of the leading New York daily newspapers. When the slavery question became the burning question in the Church, as well as in the State, Dr. Prime defended the position which was occupied by conservative men throughout the country. He had no sympathy with the radical spirit in the South or the North, which, on one side for love of slavery, and on the other side for hatred of slavery, was ready to plunge the country into the gulf of separation and war. When moral, spiritual, and peaceful methods ended in the appeal to arms, he espoused the cause of the Union with unflinching energy and faith. His editorial labors through these national and ecclesiastical crises are part of the literary history of the country. Their result was mani-

fest in making him more than ever an influential example of fearless, aggressive advocacy, through evil report and good report, of what he believed to be the truth of God and the welfare of the country.

After removing to New York Dr. Prime had a summer home in the village of White Plains, Westchester County, N. Y., until he purchased a place on the banks of the Hudson River at Dobbs' Ferry, where he resided in the summer season for several years.

In 1866 he made an extensive tour in northern and southern Europe. In the fall of that year he attended the annual conference of the British Evangelical Alliance at Bath, England, and addressed the meeting. He went abroad again in 1876, attending as delegate the Presbyterian General Council at Edinburgh, in July, 1877.

All these rural and travel experiences furnished material for the "Irenæus Letters," which appeared with unfailing regularity from week to week. Many of these were gathered into volumes, which form part of that library which contains only a fragment of the labor performed during his fifty years of continuous literary activity.

Many clergymen and laymen in various parts of the country remember Dr. Prime personally, as an influential member of Synods, General Assemblies, and other religious bodies. Being a ready and forcible speaker, alert, intense and full of humor, he was singularly successful in winning sympathy and approval for the principles and measures which he advocated. His private papers furnish no record of his part in numerous important ecclesiastical meetings. Published minutes are so meagre that it is not practicable to obtain from them any impressions that are of personal interest.



Those who heard him deliver an unpremeditated address on "The Church of Rome" in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church at Saratoga, N. Y. May 26, 1879, realized the remarkable command of resources and intensity of conviction with which he was invariably prepared to defend the faith, or to attack what he believed to be injurious error.

In May, 1883, Dr. Prime, with other delegates from the Northern Presbyterian Church, attended the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church which met in Lexington, Kentucky. His words at the close of his address at the reception of the delegates, indicate the spirit in which he participated in such scenes and incidents.

"I am reminded that twenty-five years ago our undivided and blessed assembly met in this lovely city of Lexington. I was in the pulpit with that profound theologian and eloquent preacher and beloved man, Dr. James Henley Thornwell. Dr. William S. Plumer was here, and Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge ; men of power, men of God, who waxed valiant in fight for the truth and the Church. You may build your walls about your Assembly as high as you please, but you cannot build them so high as to separate me from communion with them. I would mount up on wings as the eagle and soar into the heaven of heavens, where they reign with Christ and the saints. I would find Thornwell with Paul, and Plumer with Isaiah, and Breckinridge with Peter, and all joining with the redeemed in the song of Moses and the Lamb. You might as well try to strike out the names of Washington and Henry Clay from the history of my country, and to say I have no part with them, as to deny me by resolutions and proclamations, true sympathy and fraternal relations with these and other great and good men whose lives are my heritage, and a part of the annals of my

church. With them I held sweet communion while they lived, and to renew that communion it were sweet to die."

On Tuesday morning, Jan. 31, 1882, at about half-past ten, just as the forms of the "New York Observer," were about to be sent to the press-room, the building in which the editorial, business, and composing-rooms were situated, took fire, and in a few moments the flames surged through the halls. At the first alarm Dr. Prime and his son, Rev. Dr. Wendell Prime, with others in the offices, passed into the hall to find the rear stairway in flames; but they were able to reach the front stairway, and descended two flights in safety to the street. His brother, the Rev. Dr. E. D. G. Prime, and his son-in-law, the Rev. Dr. C. A. Stoddard, lingered to look after important papers, and were unable to reach the stairway. They escaped by the window, climbing along the signs into the window of the "Times" Building adjoining. Others were rescued by ladders at the windows; several perished, among them three of those employed in the composing-room on the fifth floor. While the fire was still raging rooms were engaged at the Astor House, as a retreat for the editors. Offers of assistance were numerous, and the kind offer from the managers of the "Tribune" was accepted. Within sight of the still burning building Dr. Prime dictated to a stenographer several columns of copy during a few continuous hours, while the other editors reproduced to the best of their ability their work which was being consumed in the conflagration. In a few hours it was all in the hands of the "Tribune" printers, and the "New York Observer" appeared that week as usual, with but a short delay.

## LITERARY LABORS.

From some private notes, which were evidently not written for publication, it is possible to give in Dr. Prime's own words a sketch of some of his literary labors during his later years :—

“Not many weeks after the death of Prof. S. F. B. Morse (April 2, 1872), inventor of the telegraph, the executors of his estate and his widow united in a written request that I would take charge of his papers and prepare his biography. His nephew, Sidney E. Morse, was my partner in the ‘Observer,’ and he was very urgent that I should accept the invitation. But my studies had never been in a direction to qualify me for such a work, and I was very reluctant to undertake it. All the friends whom I consulted advised me to take hold of it, and after patient inquiry and an examination of the material I yielded to the request. Had I known what labor it was to cost, I would not have put my hand to it. In his study I found heaps of unarranged manuscripts, thousands of miscellaneous letters, unnumbered pamphlets, books, and papers, with cuttings from newspapers innumerable; and this mighty mass, *indigesta moles*, to be reduced from chaos to order, and then explored for the few hundred pages that could be used in a popular memoir! Not a line was left by him as a help or guide to his biographer. His brothers were dead; he had outlived the companions of his early years; there was not a living person who could be of any great assistance. But having agreed to do the work, I stripped to it. I could not be spared from the ‘Observer,’ and my fear was very great that I might be tempted to neglect my daily duties in order to make progress with the memoir. On this account I think I labored harder than ever upon the ‘Observer.’ My habit was to devote the forenoon to the Morse work, and the afternoon and the evening to the paper.

To my study in the Bible House (Room 56) I had all the manuscripts of Professor Morse removed. Surrounding the room with shelves, I employed assistants to sort the papers, arrange the letters in the order of dates, and to catalogue such papers as promised to be available. Then came the perusal of this vast array of letters, etc., not one in a score affording the least material, but all to be read that nothing might by oversight be lost. Correspondence became necessary with persons to whom reference was made. Inquiries were instituted which required frequent letters and journeys and interviews. Discussions arose in regard to matters of fact, claims of rivals, rights of parties, and the truth of published statements, and in a few months I found myself involved in unaccustomed pursuits the most perplexing, harassing, and interminable. Sometimes I was nearly distracted by the conflict of opinions, and the apparent impossibility of following the thread of my story along the line of truth, so involved became the labyrinth of human life. At such times I would lie down and wait till my bewildered brain was quiet, and then resuming the work, would follow it to some result.

“During an illness in 1871 I wrote for the ‘Observer’ some ‘letters,’ which I made into a little volume, entitled ‘Walking with God, the Life hid with Christ.’ This was published by A. D. F. Randolph in the midst of my work upon the ‘Life of Morse,’ and the testimonies which came to me of its usefulness were most comforting and delightful.

“During the winter of 1872–1873 I was tempted to prepare my letters in the ‘Observer’ from Spain and the North of Europe, written in 1866–1867, for a volume. I put the letters, which my aged mother had carefully collected and preserved in books made with her own hands, into the charge of a friend, who arranged them in the form of chapters and made tables of contents. Then I revised the work, and gave to it the title ‘The Alhambra and the Kremlin, the South and the North of Europe.’ Much time was spent in seeking illustrations for the

volume, which was to be and was made as handsome as the state of the book-making art would permit. But I pursued it at *leisure* moments, — perhaps rather as a relaxation from the severer labors on the biography, which was now the great work on which my thoughts were engaged when I turned away from the ‘Observer.’ A. D. F. Randolph & Co. published my book of travel in the fall of 1873, and it was received with great favor by the public.

“In May, 1873, we took possession of the house I had purchased in January on Murray Hill. It required complete overhauling, and it was not until midsummer that we were settled. This was a great interruption to my labors on the Morse book, and seriously retarded its progress. As soon, however, as my study was ready in the new house, I had the whole of the Morse material transferred to it, and relinquishing my private room in the Bible House, pursued all my literary labors under my own roof.

“Through many years, indeed during the whole of my professional life, I had been collecting material and arranging the plan for a selection of religious poems illustrating the graces and experiences of the Christian life. Gathering many of the books of poetry made by other collectors, and the best works of modern and ancient poets whose souls were in harmony with mine, I again employed a young friend to carry out my idea and prepare the book, to which I gave the name of ‘Songs of the Soul.’ Taking the work then into my own hands, I threw out many poems, introduced more, and having thoroughly revised the whole, and by written application to the authors or publishers obtained their consent to use copyright poems, I put the book into the hands of the publishers, Robert Carter & Brothers, who issued it in elegant style, small quarto, in the winter, just before Christmas, of 1873. The reception it met was most gratifying and unexpected. The first edition was exhausted in a few days. The testimonials I have received of its value and usefulness are numerous and remarkable. One that pleased me ex-

ceedingly was a note from Rev. Prof. Moses Coit Tyler, a scholar deeply versed in English ballad literature. He was at the time he wrote editing a newspaper, and he says: 'I thank you for the great satisfaction which your book has given me. It is a monument of wide and varied research, of judicious and tasteful selection, and I believe that it is destined to be a comfort and a manifold spiritual blessing to multitudes of hearts.'

"In the spring of 1873, before I took possession of my house in Thirty-ninth Street, I was conscious of failing strength, and as the General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance was appointed to be held in the autumn, and large responsibilities were devolved upon me in relation to it, I determined to suspend for a time my work on the life of Morse. But the work was merely transferred to another department, for the preparations for the coming conference were to be made and required an immense amount of time. Returning to my duties September 1, I was soon absorbed in the arrangements for the conference to begin in October. This was the most important work that I ever performed outside of my editorial labors. As soon as I had rested a little from the excitement and fatigue of the conference work, I resumed my labors on the life of Morse, and pursued them daily and systematically through the winter. Early in the spring I began to put copy into the hands of the publishers. Then came daily proofs to be read, and more copy to be ready, for the printing was begun before the work of the author was completed. It was my practice to read the first proof carefully by myself; when the revise came back I read it aloud to Mrs. Prime, who took a deep interest in my work upon the biography from the beginning, and stimulated me greatly by her encouraging predictions. When the pages were *cast*, stereotyped, plate-proofs were sent to me, and these I examined with great care. So that I read the whole three times in proof, and parts of it many more times, as doubts arose that compelled inquiry and sometimes alteration. The printing and corrections were not finished until the close of July, 1874, and up to that time from the

summer of 1872 I had been, with the interruptions before-mentioned, incessantly at work upon the book. And during these two years I had published four other books which had required more or less attention. One of them, 'Under the Trees,' I have not referred to. In the spring of 1874 I gathered a large number of my Letters in the 'Observer,' and a few other miscellanies into a volume, which Harper & Brothers published. It was very kindly received by the press.

"The Morse biography was in the hands of the publisher, and the author was released from his care of the press, at the close of the month of July, 1874. My family had gone into the country, and I was waiting anxiously for the month of August to come, as at that time my summer vacation would begin, and I never needed it more. In the early part of July my mother, now eighty-five years old, and residing at White Plains, N. Y., with my sister, Mrs. Cummings, was stricken with a slight paralysis. I went to her frequently, and it was apparent that she was gradually nearing the end of life, though weeks, and even months, might yet be added. When August came she seemed to be so comfortable that I was able to make arrangements for a month's travel in search of refreshing rest. Joining my wife and daughter at Williamstown, Mass., we went to Ballston, N. Y., but had scarcely reached there before we received a telegram that my mother was sinking rapidly. We hastened to the bedside, and I remained with her until she died. Her last days, like her whole life, were peace. A woman of well-balanced intellect, of placid temperament, unwavering faith in God, happy in her children, not one of whom ever knowingly caused her a moment's grief, beloved and admired by a host of friends, and surrounded by every comfort her heart desired, she had long been quietly waiting till her change should come; and as day by day we saw that the tide of life was ebbing, she said nothing to indicate her own consciousness that death was approaching. Her mind was clear and quiet; she delighted to hear of Christ, and the word of God was precious in those days to her soul.

Her memory was specially vivid of early scenes, some of which she had never mentioned to us, and now she recalled and described them, amusing us by their recital, and enjoying our enjoyment. She read with her own eyes the daily newspapers to the last weeks of her life, watching with eager interest the passing events of the times, and when too feeble to read she inquired daily after the progress of things in the outer world. At last her mind fastened only upon the hymns of her own childhood; and among them the cradle hymn, 'Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,' of Dr. Watts, was often read to her, while she expressed her delight. She said to me, 'Just forget it is written for children, and how grand and beautiful it is!'

"She had a rare sense of the humorous, and long after her own muscles had become so fixed that she could not readily change the expression of her face, she would make us smile, and sometimes laugh, by her wit.

"On the morning of Aug. 24, 1875, we all gathered about her, for it was very apparent that she was in the last moments of her long and lovely life. She probably could not see us though her eyes were open. I held her hand, now cold, and as she said, 'Lay me down,' I thought she wanted me to arrange her pillows, but she continued to repeat the words, and it was evident she was saying, 'Now I lay me down to sleep.' She said it two or three times, and then put her tongue to her lips as if trying to say the words, but no sound came forth. She closed her eyes, pressing them closely shut, and ceased to breathe.

"At the funeral an address was made by my son-in-law, Rev. Charles A. Stoddard, D.D., which gave a faithful and beautiful sketch of the life and character of the best of mothers."



## THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Dr. Prime was ardently engaged in the Evangelical Alliance as a member, officer, and promoter during many of his best years. This interest and labor culminated in the Evangelical Alliance Conference, which was held in the City of New York during October, 1873. To this he devoted himself as if he had no other occupation. Among his private papers is the following:—

Nov. 1, 1873.

To give my children some idea of the amount of labor which I expended upon the General Conference of 1873, I recited the following to a stenographer.

S. I. PRIME.

“In the year 1866, while travelling in Europe, I received an invitation from the Executive Committee of the Evangelical Alliance of the United States to attend the General Conference which was to be held in Amsterdam. At the same time I was requested by the British organization to attend and represent the United States at that meeting. In consequence of the prevalence of the cholera the proposed meeting was postponed until August, 1867, at which time, in company with my son, the Rev. Wendell Prime, I visited Amsterdam, and spent ten days in that city attending the sessions of the Conference.

“Becoming deeply interested in the men whom I met and in the great work of the Alliance, and obtaining a full view of its relations to the cause of Evangelical truth in Europe and throughout the world, I returned home with a determination to do whatever was in my power to extend its influence as an organization in the United States.

“Upon my return I was requested by the Executive Committee of the Alliance here to make a report of the proceedings of the Alliance at Amsterdam, which I delivered at a meeting

held in the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, in October, 1867.

“At the Amsterdam Conference I presented a paper on ‘The State of Religion in the United States,’ which had been prepared by Professor H. B. Smith, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, he being unable to attend the Conference and present it in person. This paper closed with an invitation from the United States Branch to the General Conference to hold its next session in the City of New York. A consultation was held on the subject, and it was resolved in Amsterdam to refer the subject to the United States Branch for correspondence with the other branches throughout the world, and if it should be deemed advisable after such consultation, that the Conference should be held in New York.

“After much correspondence it was decided to hold the Conference in New York City in 1870. The Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff, who was one of the earliest promoters of the Evangelical Alliance in this country, and in whose study the United States Branch was revived in the year 1865, after having been in a state of inaction for several years, was associated with me as the Secretary of the United States Alliance. He had charge of the correspondence with the foreign delegates, while I was conducting that with those who had been invited in our own country. Elaborate preparations were made during the early part of the year for the great assembly, to be followed by great disappointment; for the disturbed condition of Europe made it impracticable to secure the attendance of foreign delegates. After two years, preparations were resumed to hold the Conference in 1873.

“Dr. Schaff again went abroad and conferred with the gentlemen who had previously been invited. If they were unable to come, he was to invite others, and by all means to secure the attendance of men of influence, learning, and position.

“In the spring of 1873, the Executive Committee of the United States Branch appointed a large Committee of Arrange-

ments. Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby, who had held the position of chairman in the year 1870, now declined on account of his health. Dr. Nathan Bishop, who was requested to take the place, declined on account of the pressure of his public duties. Mr. Norman White and others were also urged to take it, but also declined. Finding it impracticable to obtain the services of any other person for this place, I was finally obliged to undertake the responsibility of it in addition to the other duties which were imposed upon me in consequence of my long connection with the Alliance.

“Association Hall was placed at the disposal of the Alliance, and the three nearest churches — the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, St. Paul’s M. E. Church, and the Madison Square Presbyterian — were all secured, to be open at all times during the sessions of the Conference for use at such periods as they should be required.

“I spent the month of August in necessary relaxation at the seaside, having been greatly exhausted by my labors in connection with my daily work, increased by the needful preparations for the Conference, and greatly aggravated by the domestic sorrow which came upon me in the death of Helen Lefferts Prime at Newburgh, on the Hudson, the wife of my son Wendell.

“These weeks of anxiety and care and labor had thoroughly worn me out ; and I sought with diligence to recruit my health in order that I might with some degree of strength enter upon still more exhausting labors which were evidently before me.

“Returning on the first of September to New York, and resuming my labors in the office of the ‘Observer,’ and also in the office of the Alliance, I called the various committees together immediately, and entered more seriously than ever upon the final preparations for the Conference.

“The Programme Committee were in session every week, and oftentimes several times a week. Their duties were exceedingly onerous and oftentimes complicated and harassing.

“Dr. Schaff was still absent in Europe, returning the week prior to the assembling of the Conference.

“We were in constant receipt of intelligence that made changes necessary in the programme.

“Death invaded the number of those who were to be present and assist. Some of the most distinguished men cancelled their engagements. Sudden sickness fell upon some of them, and the duties of others were found incompatible with their attendance. It was necessary to fill the places of those by new selections ; and the correspondence with them involved a great amount of labor.

“The various sub-committees of the Committee of Arrangements, and the Executive Committee, held meetings which required my attendance daily, and sometimes two or three times a day, and in different parts of the city ; so that my whole time that I could spare from the duties of my own office was occupied with these distracting and anxious labors.

“It was proposed, for the purpose of securing additional funds to pay the expenses of the meeting, that reserved seats in the Association Hall should be sold at ten dollars each for the entire session. When these seats were advertised the rush to secure them was so great that we at once perceived that the Conference had taken a strong hold upon the public mind. The applications for seats were so many that it became necessary for us, after the number of 400 were sold (to which number we were limited) to print a circular to send back with the money that came from all parts of the country, even from distant places, from persons who were desirous of securing seats that they might enjoy the entire session of the Conference. But the avidity of the public was still more manifest when the hour for the opening reception arrived. Long before the time for the admission of the guests the crowd at the door of the Association Hall extended into the street, and the most intense anxiety prevailed on the part of the people to secure an early admission. The doors were thrown open, and the whole building, which

had been beautifully decorated and lighted for the occasion, the parlors, and reading rooms were instantly filled, and the pressure was so great that it was scarcely possible to move from room to room.

“After an hour or two spent in such social intercourse as was possible under the circumstances the foreign delegates were invited into the audience hall and seated in reserved seats in the centre of the room.

“After they were seated the doors were thrown open and the multitude admitted, thronging every part of the hall, and every available place for sitting and standing being immediately filled. The address of welcome was then given by Dr. Adams, after suitable devotional exercises, and responses were made by many of the foreign delegates, one from almost every country that was represented on the occasion. These exercises were continued until half-past ten o'clock, when the crowd dispersed, having enjoyed one of the most extraordinary meetings that had ever been held in the City of New York.

“I had fondly hoped that my responsibilities were now at an end, and that the Conference being successfully launched I might be relieved from any further exhausting duties; but the Committee on the Programme, to whom was confided the duty of selecting the officers of the Conference, had imposed upon me the office of General Secretary of the Conference, and against my most earnest remonstrances they insisted that the time and labor that I had expended in planning the Conference made it essential that I should now continue my efforts and see that these arrangements were successfully carried out. On the following morning, October 2, the Conference was opened in Steinway Hall, which was filled to overflowing, and thousands of people unable to obtain admittance were compelled to retire. I was elected General Secretary, and at once assumed the responsibility of the direction of the exercises, which were to be carried out in large part according to the programme which had been previously prepared,

“ Returning to Association Hall for the exercises on the afternoon of the following day, it was very soon discovered that the building would be inadequate to hold the concourse of people who thronged its courts. Happily, we had made arrangements for the use of the adjoining churches, and these were immediately thrown open; and the Committee on the Programme, meeting every day, divided the original programme into sections, — assigning sections to two and sometimes three churches, besides the Association Hall, to accommodate the people who wished to hear; and also to get through the programme in the number of days which had been set apart for the Conference.

“ But this separation into divers meetings made the labors of the Executive Officers far greater, and required constant watchfulness and anxiety in order that all might be carried on without confusion or failure. It was necessary to see that each meeting was properly organized; that the speakers who were assigned to each place were informed of the place in which they were to speak, and the hour; and that the necessary officers were on hand to conduct the meetings.

“ The public excitement was greatly increased by the full and graphic reports which were made by the daily press, and became so great that all the houses which were open for the meetings were filled to overflowing. Especially was this the case at the evening meetings, when the addresses were to be of a popular character, and when more people were released from the claims of business and were able to attend. But through the days there was no abatement whatever of the interest on the part of the people.

“ The delegates from abroad participated in the general excitement. They were filled with astonishment when they saw the vast multitudes flocking from day to day and night after night to attend upon these religious exercises, which gave them new ideas in regard to the power of evangelical religion in the United States. An effect equally extraordinary was produced

upon the outside world. Those who did not sympathize with the objects of the Evangelical Alliance showed that they too were astonished by the great enthusiasm and manifest power of the convention.

“In the whole course of my own public labors and private studies no occasion had ever required so intense and protracted a strain upon my nervous system as these successive meetings following upon a long season of preparatory labors. It was necessary for me, rising early in the morning, to lay out the several duties to be done during the day, writing them out in order that I might be able systematically to carry them into effect.

“To plunge into the labors without a perfect system would involve confusion and at once endanger the success of the day ; but by a careful classing of the work to be done, and the arrangements by which it was to be accomplished, I was enabled with some degree of efficiency to get on with the work. All these several meetings were to be provided for, and oftentimes very suddenly and with very scanty material. Sometimes when we supposed that everything was going on successfully, I would receive information that the crowd upon the outside had become so great that an additional church had been opened, and was now filled with people waiting for speakers. It was necessary to instantly find the men who would go and instruct the expectant multitudes. But these labors would have been comparatively slight, and would have required no great expenditure of nervous force had it not been for the constant perplexities and vexations to which I was subjected by the unreasonableness of good men. The infirmities of human nature were manifested on such occasions with great frequency and force. Hundreds of men came to the convention and expected to obtain admission as delegates who had no claim whatever to admission, not being accredited from any branch of the Alliance or from any association that had the slightest claims to a representation in the Conference.

“These good men were greatly disappointed on finding themselves necessarily excluded by the terms of the constitution, which did not recognize delegates from any other source than auxiliary or branch Alliances in different parts of the country, or from foreign lands. They were, however, very generally admitted to seats on the floor of the Conference, that they might have the same opportunities of enjoying the Conference which the delegates themselves possessed. This, however, only led to new complications; for, whenever privileges and invitations were extended to the Conference, these men claimed the right of accepting and enjoying them all. Innumerable and inevitable annoyances of this kind added to the friction and strain. But the relief of mind after the success of the Conference was assured was so great that I pursued these severe labors with a great degree of enjoyment; notwithstanding all the troubles with which they were attended.

“I had for so many months and years been anticipating with intense desire and anxiety the coming of the Conference, and had so often feared because of the apathy of the Church on the subject that it would be a failure, that when its success was assured, and especially when it became not only a success, but a triumph of evangelical religion, I felt not only amply repaid for all the labor involved, but exceedingly happy in the consciousness of having been able to contribute something to that success. Instead of sinking down under these labors during the Conference my health improved day by day; and at the close of the series of meetings, and for successive days afterwards I continued in the enjoyment of the same state of health that I had been in previous to the meetings. I am not aware that I lost the rest of a single night at any time during or after the Conference, or that I experienced the slightest inconvenience in health as the result of the labors which were devolved upon me.

“In this I found a most abundant cause for gratitude to God. In the sixty-first year of my age, at a period of life when only



most happy to be excused from the responsibilities of such labors as properly belonged to younger men, I had been able to carry out a series of meetings which in their influence, their popularity, and the enjoyment which they gave to the multitudes which attended them may justly be regarded as among the most important and valuable which have ever been held in this country."



**Part Fifth.**

PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS.



## Part Fifth.

### PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

AMONG the vast variety of topics treated by "Irenæus" in his "Letters," none gave greater satisfaction than his biographical sketches of great and good men with whom he lived in close personal relations. These are so numerous that they would form a volume by themselves. We can give but a few of these sketches relating to men representing widely different spheres of faith and work.

THE REV. WILLIAM ADAMS, D.D.,

who died Aug. 31, 1880, was thus commemorated by "Irenæus:"

"When he contemplated the resignation of his pastoral charge on Madison Square to accept the presidency of the Theological Seminary, he was doubtful as to the line of his duty, and sent for friends to counsel on the great and difficult question. It was not for me to *advise* such a man; but when he would have an opinion, I could only say: 'It is quite probable that you are called of God to be the president of the Seminary, but it is not necessary that you retire from the Madison Square pulpit. A colleague or assistant may supply your lack of service, when you assume other labors; but such a life as yours will be rounded and complete

when you die in the highest office on earth, — that of a Christian PASTOR.’

“He resigned from a sense of duty to the people, when he decided to take the chair, and it is to be presumed he did not regret the decision. With the Apostle he could always say, ‘This one thing I do;’ and he often spoke in private to me in terms of high commendation of those men who spend their time and strength in the work to which they are called, declining to divert their minds or employ their powers in extra labors, however useful and important they may be.

“He was invited to take part in the centennial celebration of the Battle of Lexington, where the first blow of the American Revolution was struck, and the shot was fired that was heard around the world. He invited me to go with him, to be the guest of his brother-in-law, Mr. Magoun, in Medford, near to Lexington. It so happened that I had at that time the pistol from which that shot was fired, — the pistol that Major Pitcairn discharged when he gave the first order to British soldiers to fire on the Americans. Armed with this pistol and its twin, I joined Dr. Adams and went to the battle-field. But there was no fighting now. Those three days of social life with him and his friends were ideal days. He loved to take me to houses and hills and churches in that region where his youth and his young ministry were spent; where he first loved and was married; he lived over the scenes of early manhood, when life was all before him and hopes of usefulness were high. He was young again. With his children and theirs around him, and a thousand sweet associations, every moment his loving nature awoke as in the morning of spring, and he was fresh, buoyant, and cheerful, as if he was

on the verge of thirty, and not of three score and ten.

“We were very desirous to have him go to Edinburgh to the General Council in 1877, and it was with the greatest reluctance that he yielded to the pressing solicitations of his brethren. He did not like to go away from home. And when he reached London he was thoroughly homesick. He came from the hotel where he was in the midst of friends, and sought for rooms in the private lodgings I was enjoying. Here he met my daughters, and when he gave them each a paternal kiss, he said, ‘There, that’s the first thing like home I have had since I came away.’ He said he longed to go back, and his eyes were full of tears as he spoke. It was wonderful to see a stately, dignified, elegant old man, full of honors and friends, whom every one was proud to welcome and entertain, so child-like and simple, so full of affection for those he had left behind that his care now was to get back again as soon as he could.

“In Edinburgh it was my lot to be attacked with illness at the house of my kind friend, Rev. Dr. W. G. Blaikie. The anxiety of Dr. Adams, his sympathy, his tenderness, his attentions, were those of an elder brother or parent. He has told me since that his fears were great that I would not recover. This apprehension was the result of his own great depression of spirits, for it was not shared by any one else. But it brought out the exceeding love of his heart, his overflowing sympathy, and it endeared him to me more tenderly than ever. How proud of him we all were at that great council or men from all lands! If there was one in that assembly of divines of loftier and nobler mien than Dr. Adams, I did not see him.

“Some days after the Council was dissolved I was travelling from London to Folkestone, on my way to Paris. Into the same compartment on the rail-car came an English gentleman, whose servant in livery stowed away his travel-impediments and retired. The stranger, a fine-looking man, of courtly manners and address, very soon began to converse with me in the manner said to be peculiar to my countrymen. He put questions to me. Having ascertained that I was an American traveller, and from New York, he said to me, ‘Are you acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Adams?’ When he learned that Dr. Adams was a valued friend of mine, he went on to say: ‘What a splendid specimen of the Christian gentleman he is! I had the pleasure of meeting him in London but a few days ago, and to present him to Mr. Gladstone, who was charmed with him, and expressed to me privately his admiration of the American scholar and divine.’

“I did not learn my travelling companion’s name until I related the incident to Dr. Adams, who recalled him at once.

“When the appeal came to Christians in America to send a deputation to the Emperor of Russia to ask liberty of worship for dissenters in the Baltic provinces of his empire, we held a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, and it was easily resolved that such a deputation was to be desired; but as the men must go at their own charges, over the ocean and the continent, where were the men to be found? In the silence that ensued, Dr. Adams came across the room and whispered in my ear, ‘I will go.’ I presume it was the only time he ever nominated himself. But the service was not one to be sought, and volunteers were not to be found. He was



appointed at once, others followed; the deputation was filled; it went on its mission, and God gave it great success.

“His benevolence was only equalled by his facility for leading others to be generous. They relied so justly on his judgment that they gave with confidence and pleasure when he endorsed the object. And the amounts of money given by his friends to charitable objects at his indication can never now be added up; but if they could, the sum would be enormous and astonishing. A foreign missionary lost the sum of three thousand dollars, and Dr. Adams said to me: ‘Let us make it up to him for the benefit of his children. You raise one thousand and I will raise two.’ He easily got his before I got mine, but it was all obtained and is now bearing fruit.

“I am very sorry that I cannot lay my hand on his playful note, in February, 1876, asking me to come and dine with some young friends and help keep them in order. Among the guests at that memorable dinner, there was no one, except Dr. Calhoun, missionary from Mount Lebanon, and myself, less than fourscore years of age. Four of them preceded Dr. Adams to the eternal state. With what graceful dignity, charming simplicity and ease, he sat at the head of his hospitable table on that occasion, — drawing each one out according to his measure and manner, and filling up every pause with his own ready anecdote and reminiscence.

“Only last May I received from Dr. Adams a letter answering some inquiries, in which he writes of Dr. Muhlenberg and the dinner to which reference is made above. He says: —

I was expecting a visit at that time from a relative in Connecticut, more than ninety years of age, who at this very time is more elastic than I am.

It so happened that a few days before I had received a very pleasant letter from the late Richard H. Dana, then past ninety, containing a very pleasant message from Bryant, so that I played the part of hyphen between the two great poets.

I have been reading this evening the life of Dr. Muhlenberg, and have been melted into tenderness by many of its incidents. He was a veritable saint, with nothing of asceticism about him; he knew the greatness and the blessedness of self-subjection for the good of others. He was truly catholic in spirit, while cordially attached to his own church. His taste was gratified by its forms of worship and by the right observance of its calendar. He left his ideal of representative communion as a legacy with me and ——— to be carried into execution, and I am reproached when looking upon his sweet and beautiful face, because I have been forgetful of the trust. More of this hereafter.

I hope I shall be made better by my renewed intercourse with Dr. Muhlenberg in the pages of this work.

Cordially yours,

W. ADAMS.

“When Dr. Adams had retired from the pulpit, and his successor was settled, I made a sketch, beginning with this illustration: ‘If you would know what space you fill in the world, thread a cambric needle, drop the needle into the sea, draw it out again, and see the hole that is left. That’s you.’

“The next week after the notice was in print he met me with his bright and loving smile and said: ‘I get letters telling me I am only a cambric needle in the water, after all.’

“Ah, me! the simile now seems worse than a mockery. The city, the Seminary, the church at large, and Dr.

Adams not there. The vacancy is great. It will be years many before it is filled. Israel has chariots and horsemen, but where is the man like him who stood at the head of the host?"

THE REV. WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG, D.D.

AMONG other recollections of this divine, Dr. Prime wrote as follows: —

"He is (not was, for such as he live long after they are buried) a living illustration of the fact that a man may be *in* the world and not *of* it; above it while he is in it; a godly man of action and business, as well as of prayer and faith. In him was no guile. He would suffer wrong rather than do wrong. He was not original; he had a pattern, and that pattern was Christ.

"Dr. Muhlenberg was not one of your softly, untempered, half-baked men, afraid to speak out and say what he felt. He went one day to the office of a rich friend to ask him, as landlord, to release a poor woman from her rent, which was due. Failing, he begged for a small donation for the widow, which was also refused. Then he berated his friend in good set terms, adding: 'I would rather take my chance for heaven with the meanest beggar in New York than with you.' It gratifies one's depravity to know that the very best men do and say things that *we* are chided for when human nature asserts itself in honest rebuke of wrong.

"I would not make a private party, however pleasant, distinguished, and memorable, the subject of public remark, but finding a reference to it in his memoir, I may. It was one of those episodes in life that old men enjoy

with a flavor which youth does not know. For old age has its pleasures, as Cicero and other wise and great men have found. Of this venerable company I was made one, on account of my youth, as the kind and clever note of invitation from the accomplished host — himself a host — very neatly intimated. Mr. Charles H. Russell sat by the side of Dr. Adams.

“Dr. Muhlenberg, Mr. W. C. Bryant, Mr. James Brown, Mr. Peter Cooper, Dr. Calhoun, of goodly Lebanon, and one more, composed the company.

“Dr. Adams requested Dr. Muhlenberg to ask the blessing. The patriarch complied in these rhythmical words: —

‘Solemn thanks be our grace for the years that are past,  
With their blessings untold; and though this be our last,  
Yet joyful our trust that through Christ it be given  
All here meet again at his table in heaven.’

“It was very natural that we should pass from this brief poem and prayer to others by the same author, and I asked Dr. Muhlenberg for the correct reading of a line in his celebrated hymn: —

‘I would not live away.’

‘It is sometimes printed “the few lucid mornings,” and again, “the few lurid mornings.” Which of these, Doctor, is the true reading?’

“‘Either or neither,’ he replied, with some spirit. ‘I do not believe in the hymn; it does not express the better feelings of the saint, and I would not write it now.’

“This was a surprise to me, but I was glad to hear him say so.

“ Mr. Bryant took a very cheerful view of old age, and disclaimed any feelings of depression or infirmity with the advance of life. When some pleasantry enlivened the table, Mr. Brown, who sat next to me, and was somewhat hard of hearing, looked up deplorably, and said: —

“ ‘ You don’t know how much I lose by being deaf.’

“ ‘ Ay, Mr. Brown,’ I replied, ‘ and *you* don’t know how much you gain.’

“ Of those six guests, four have put on immortality. Dr. Calhoun died a few months afterwards. Mr. James Brown followed, *haud longo intervallo*. Then Dr. Muhlenberg slept with his beloved in St. Johnland. Mr. W. C. Bryant has his wish fulfilled in being buried in June, among his own flowers in Roslyn.

“ Mr. Peter Cooper I met at the De Lesseps dinner the other night, and his seat was next to mine. It must be wisdom, not age, that puts me with these venerable men. He said to me, ‘ I am ninety years old, and do not feel the effects of age.’

“ Wonderful old man! useful and honored to the last; undoubtedly the ‘ first citizen ’ now.

“ Dr. Muhlenberg loved Dr. Adams tenderly, which is not remarkable; but I find in this volume an observation by Dr. Adams that is characteristic of both him and his friend. Dr. Adams says: —

“ ‘ More than once I have said to my family, when returning from some interview with him in which he had honored me with a kiss, that I felt as if the Apostle John had embraced me and repeated in my ear some words which had been whispered to him by the Master on whose bosom he had leaned at the Supper.’

“When Dr. Muhlenberg rested from his labors, and was not, for God took him, we fondly trusted that some one, in his spirit and power, would take up the work he left. Others do perpetuate the useful charities he founded. But where is the living presence of the model saint and pastor and friend? Who among us now sanctifies the city by a life of supernal beauty in its mephitic atmosphere?

“Dr. Muhlenberg left a hoarded heap of gold behind him, — two gold pieces, forty dollars in all! This was his savings to pay for his burial! All that he had, all that he received, all that he was, he gave to Christ and his friends while living, and died leaving not enough to pay the expenses of his funeral.”

THE REV. WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS, D. D.

DR. PRIME'S address at the funeral of this eminent divine and scholar is so characteristic of his own style and spirit that it is given here in full: —

“The church mourns that a prince has fallen in Israel. The city sorrows at the loss of one of her eldest sons, who has walked her streets with spotless garments for eighty years, to bless and adorn the place that gave him birth, and out of which he has never lived. Learning comes, with measured steps and slow, to muse in sadness at the bier of one who had garnered her vast stores in his capacious mind and had them always at his command. Scholarship, the handmaid of learning, approaches and with gracefulness and beauty lays a chaplet on the marble brow of the dead scholar. All graces that adorn humanity, illumined and glorified by the

spirit of our divine religion, come to his funeral. Genius, taste, eloquence, art, poetry, philosophy, history, modesty, meekness, humility, whatever the human intellect, exalted by the grace of God, can be and do, each and all take on the form of mourners, and stand with bowed and reverent heads around the coffin of the man who taught them what to be by what he was.

“In the year 1832, in this city, a Christian church assembled in a public hall. They had as yet no house of worship of their own, being a colony or company from the church of which the distinguished Dr. Cone was pastor. And now they had met to call some one to be their minister, teacher, and leader. One of the eldest of the congregation, after various names had been discussed, arose and said, ‘Why should we go abroad for a pastor when there is one of our own number who has all the gifts that qualify a man for such a service?’ A young man named William R. Williams here rose and said, ‘If we have such a man among us, let us lay hands upon him.’ The people knew to whom the speaker referred, and with one voice they called him to forsake the law and preach to them the gospel. He saw the heavenly vision, obeyed the divine summons, became the pastor of that flock, and fed them with the finest of wheat, and gave them the richest wine to drink, for the space of fifty-two years, till the Master called him four years ago to join ‘the song of them that triumph and the shout of them that feast.’

“Born in this city, Oct. 14, 1804, son of the Rev. John Williams, pastor of the Oliver Street Baptist Church, he was taught in childhood in an academy on Chatham Square, hard by his father’s house of worship. The venerable Dr. William Hague, who survives

his school-fellow, relates that the little shy lad surpassed all his companions in the studies of the school, as he did in Columbia College, from which he was graduated with the highest honors in 1823. Choosing the law as his profession, he studied with the Hon. Peter A. Jay, and practised with him five years. After his conversion he joined the church of which his father was pastor, who was followed in the ministry by the Rev. Dr. Cone. Mr. Williams was active in Christian work, displaying those rare endowments that attracted the attention of his brethren, and led to his being called to lead them into green pastures by the side of still waters. His congregation built a house for God in Amity Street, near Broadway, where the gospel was proclaimed for more than one generation, with a simplicity, fidelity, richness, and power that no pulpit in the city has ever surpassed. There sinners were converted and souls trained for heaven; there the missionary spirit was fostered and prevailed; there the Redeemer's praise was sung by multitudes now singing with the spirits of the just made perfect. And when the voice of this great preacher failed him, and his audience seemed to be small because he could not be heard by many, it was said that the angels were wont to come down and listen. I cannot say how true that is; but this I know, they would have heard only what was worth their hearing; and they would have been glad to take his sermons and go into all the earth with them to preach the everlasting gospel to every creature.

“Some of those sermons have been printed and widely read. His addresses on special occasions at seats of learning, and elsewhere growing into volumes have wrought themselves into the mind of the church,



and have become potent moral forces in the lives of those who know not whence their impulses came. The Rev. William M. Taylor, D. D., now present, says that when Dr. Williams's essay on 'The Conservative Principle in Literature' was published in Glasgow, he read it, and it gave a fresh color and influence to his whole life-work which he feels to this day. He regards that as one of the great religious discourses in the language.

"That is doubtless the greatest of Dr. Williams's productions. Though written forty years ago, it is fresh to-day and will be for all time. It makes the Cross of Christ the grand conserving force in the world's literature. He draws illustrations from history, sacred and profane, he rifles the realms of science and art, searches the profoundest depths of philosophy, adorns it with the charms of poetry and song, infuses the blood of Christ into the stupendous argument, till it glows and burns with the heat of the gospel, while the trumpet and thunder of eternal law shake the earth and heaven, as the dread artillery of God is seen marching on to the destruction of error and the establishment of everlasting truth.

"He was a mighty reader of books in youth, manhood, and old age. He read them in many languages. He bought them most abundantly, and gathered a library larger, richer, and more varied and valuable than any other minister among us is known to possess. He knew more about books in all departments of knowledge than almost any other man. He was a bibliophile indeed. He lived among his books. He died among them, as we shall see.

"Those who never heard Dr. Williams, and never read his magnificent productions will suspect me of exaggeration in speaking thus of his knowledge, breadth,

and power. But why should I fear to speak in the most exalted strains of Christian eulogy of this illustrious man, when I heard the late Dr. William Adams (easily the most accomplished divine in the denomination which he dignified and adorned) say: 'I am thankful that we have such a man among us, an honor to the ministry, and who in sound learning and varied accomplishments is unsurpassed in this wide land.'

"And the successor of Dr. Adams in the presidency of Union Theological Seminary, the Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, said of Dr. Williams: 'It is seldom we meet with a man so difficult to praise adequately, one in whom we find combined masterly intellect, sound scholarship, and genuine breadth. He is the man I have revered and do revere beyond all others in our city.'

"And Dr. John Hall, one of my hearers now, confesses: 'I have no language at command to express my admiration and respect for one whose clearness of thought, justness of discrimination, deep learning, catholic views, and affluence of imagination are recognized so widely.' With all his intellectual force and vast accumulation of knowledge, Dr. Williams was as simple-hearted as a child and tender as a woman. He seemed more like an inspired child than a great man, — so modest, so humble, so gentle were all his words and ways. Therefore he was a beloved pastor as well as a grand preacher. A son of consolation in the chamber of grief, he ministered tenderly to the sick and afflicted in the loving spirit of his Master. Rare is such a combination of graces in a child of God. Absorbed in books, the great scholar seldom has sympathies with the world about him. He comes to live among the past and to lose his interest in the present.

“Not always is a great preacher a good shepherd. But it was the glory of this good man that his heart was never chilled by the blood going to the head: he knew much and loved more. He became very wise and very learned, but he kept near the Cross of Christ, the central theme of his studies and the radiant point in every sermon. Had not his voice failed him he would have been mighty in the pulpit and on the platform, a leader in the religious world, and of world-wide fame.

“For many years past he has been dwelling among us, but dwelling apart, yet in living sympathy with the church, with her institutions of learning and religion, and with the great movements of the age. Many of the younger race of ministers scarcely knew that this master in Israel was still here. But his near friends knew it and cherished him tenderly. A loving home circle held him back from heaven. He preached his last sermon March 22. A fatal illness laid its hand upon him. The patriarch of fourscore knew the Master’s call. And as the end drew nigh he said: ‘Take me out of this bed and carry me into the library among the books that I love.’ In tender arms they bore him, as he wished. The faithful, loving wife of his youth, two noble sons, and a few dear friends were around him. More than all, the Author of his faith, Jesus the Saviour, whom he had preached and loved with undying love, was with him. He cast a languid, dying eye upon the friends and books he loved, and then upon his Saviour’s breast ‘he leaned his head, and breathed his life out sweetly there.’”

## THE REV. J. W. CUMMINGS, D. D.

OF the Reverend J. W. Cummings, D. D., the accomplished pastor of St. Stephen's, New York, who died January 4, 1866, Dr. Prime gives the following reminiscences: —

“This, as I learn by the daily papers, is the anniversary of the death of Rev. Dr. Cummings, the pastor of St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church in Twenty-eighth Street, in this city. His church was, and is, distinguished for its music, which draws throngs to its courts. The style of the music is more artistic than we have in our most fashionable Protestant churches, but it is attractive in the highest degree. He died thirteen years ago to-day, and, as on the return of each anniversary, a solemn high Mass of requiem was celebrated in the church of his affection. He was a remarkable man, a companionable, cultivated scholar and gentleman.

“My recollections of him are refreshing, and they come to me this evening so cheerily that I must ask you to share them with me.

“I was indebted to a ‘mutual friend,’ Mr. W. A. Seaver, for my first acquaintance with Dr. Cummings. We were Mr. Seaver's guests at dinner. A few moments after first speaking with him, for the grasp of his warm hand assured me he was ready for a cheerful word, I said to him: —

“‘Dr. Cummings, I take this, the first opportunity of meeting you, to beg your pardon for breaking open a letter of yours at my office.’

“‘Ah,’ said he, ‘how was that? I have forgotten it.’

“‘Yes, a letter came to us with your name on it, and as one of our editors bore the same name as yours, he supposed it was for him and broke the seal. But finding it was written in Latin and came from Rome, we concluded it must be for some one else and returned it to the post-office.’

“‘Oh, yes,’ he replied, ‘I remember now ; it was an indulgence we had sent for from the Pope ; but probably you needed it at your office more than we did, and so it went to you !’

“‘Speaking of the power of music in church, he said to me : ‘I will undertake to fill any one of your churches to overflowing every Sunday if you will let me provide the music.’

“‘Your music,’ I replied, ‘will not suit the taste of our people, who do not fancy the style of St. Stephen’s.’

“‘But it shall be purely Protestant and Presbyterian, — such music as you delight in ; adapted to your forms of worship and the wants of your people. Our music would drive away your congregations, but music delights, and will always draw the crowd. I am very sure that your churches do not appreciate its value as a means of bringing the multitude to the house of God.’

“‘We spend money enough on it,’ I said, ‘often as much on the choir as on the pulpit.’

“‘Very true, but you pay for that kind of music that does not accord with your service ; it does not address itself to the sentiment, the sensibility, the emotional nature ; it is often an approach to the opera without reaching it — so that it is neither the one thing nor the other. Ours is artistic, in harmony with our ritual, addressing the imagination through the senses ; you appeal to the intellect and the heart, and need a music to match your services.’

“These are a few only of the words we exchanged, but we met not long afterwards at his own table, in his own house. Fifteen or twenty gentlemen sat down ; all but four were priests or laymen of the Romish Church. Dr. Cummings, at the head of the table, had two of us Protestants on one hand, and two on the other. The Austrian consul presided at the other end of the long table. After we were seated, our host, looking along the rows of guests, remarked with great glee, ‘Now we have these Protestants, we’ll roast them.’ I returned his smiles and said, ‘I thought we all belonged to the same *sect*,’

“‘And which?’ exclaimed some one.

“‘The Society of Friends,’ said I; and they gave me a cheer along the line, and did not try to roast a Protestant.

“It was a memorable dinner. I made the acquaintance of several men of learning, travel, and genius, whose friendship I prized. Among the books lying around was a volume of epitaphs composed by Dr. Cummings. He told me that his people constantly came to him for lines to put on the gravestones of their children and friends, and he was obliged to make a book of them, so that they could take what pleased them. He gave me a copy, and I made a commendatory notice of it in the ‘Observer.’ He remarked afterwards to a friend of mine that he did not suppose it possible for a Protestant to speak so kindly of a Catholic production. As the epitaphs were the expression of human sympathy and love, the most of them were such as come from and to every aching heart.

“And by and by it came his time to die. He was in the prime and vigor of life when disease overtook him, and with slow approaches wore his life away. His constitutional cheerfulness never failed him. I think an invitation he gave to our friend Mr. Seaver has no example in the speech of dying men of ancient or modern times. Socrates conversed with his friends serenely. Philosophy and religion have both made death-beds cheerful. I have spoken of Dr. Cummings’s love of music and its exquisite culture at St. Stephen’s. It was his pride and joy; and one who has no music in his soul cannot understand his dying words. Mr. Seaver was in the habit of seeing him almost daily, and each visit was now apparently to be the last. One day, as the end was very near and the two friends were parting, the dying said to the living, ‘Come to the funeral, the music will be splendid.’

“And so it was; and on each return of his death-day, January the 4th, the arches of St. Stephen’s become anthems, and its walls are vocal with song, in memory of the departed pastor, an accomplished gentleman and genial friend,”

In an article in "The Christian Advocate," Dr. Prime thus commemorated several of those whom he entitled: —

"MY METHODIST FRIENDS."

"THE REV. DAVID TERRY was one of the humblest and holiest of my personal friends among the Methodists. He was a man quite unknown to fame, but, like Apelles, approved of Christ, and greatly loved in the communion of saints to which he belonged. He was an office secretary in the mission rooms of the Methodist Episcopal Church, having been a local and travelling preacher until the failure of his health and voice compelled him to pursue a path of usefulness that did not require him to speak in public. He became personally interested in the missionaries, who looked to him as their best friend, and before they left this port to go to the ends of the world they loved to make a visit at his house; and if any of them returned, his hospitable door was the first they wished to enter on arriving. He was in the habit of writing to me and making warm expressions of personal attachment before I had met him face to face. When I came to know him the attachment was mutual, and continued to increase so long as he lived. I met him at St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church at the close of an evening service, and he said to me, 'I want you to preach my funeral sermon.' When I told him that I hoped there was no need of thinking about that at present, he informed me of the delicate state of his health and the probability that his life would not be long. He never spoke to me on the subject again; and as I was not invited to perform the service after his death, it was evident that he did not intimate his wishes to any one else.

"When I learned that he was very ill — this was not his last sickness — I went to his bedside. He took my hand, kissed it tenderly, and said: 'I was almost over the river; I thought I was crossing it; but it was not *His* will.' By and by his mortal

sickness came and he was full of peace. The heavens opened to his eye of sublime and simple faith, and angels seemed to be about us as I knelt in prayer by the big easy-chair in which he was slowly dying. A purer, humbler, better man than David Terry it has not been my lot to meet, and I do not expect to see another just like him among the saints on earth.

“The four brothers JOHN, JAMES, WESLEY, and FLETCHER HARPER were my warm personal friends during a long term of years. That friendship began in business matters. On my return in 1854 from Europe and the East they applied to me for a book of travels, and while they were bringing it out I had occasion to be often with them. The acquaintance ripened into intimacy with some of them that continued through their lives. They were in many respects a remarkable quartet, the like of which has probably never been known in this city. Their lives would reflect credit upon any body of Christians to which they belonged. Intelligently attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church, they were fond of its ministers and its ordinances. They had their several and distinct departments, and the harmony with which they wrought and the efficiency of their united but divided labor was wonderful. If *E pluribus unum* had been the motto on their coat of arms it would have expressed the nature and result of their partnership. The four were one. James Harper was the only one of them given to humor. He was joking or making pleasantry the most of the time. And indeed when I first knew the brothers he was not confined to any specific bureau, but, circulating generally, he imparted life and sunlight to the whole establishment. John Harper managed the finances with masterly skill. It was marvellous to see him with head buried in account-books, plodding silently through them until two o'clock in the afternoon, and then quietly leaving the office to drive a fast horse beyond the Park until sunset. Wesley was a devout man, with a temper like that of John in the gospel, so sweet and gentle. To know him was to love him,



Fletcher was the youngest of the four. He dealt with authors and decided on books to be published. For twenty years he was my confidential adviser, and I sometimes thought I was his. I mention these traits and our relations for the purpose of saying that in all the years of my intercourse with these men there was never an incident or word or omission that was not in perfect keeping with the highest type of Christian integrity. They had the reputation of being shrewd at bargains. I do not know whether they were or not ; but they were always on the square, keeping to every engagement, paying one hundred cents on a dollar, and doing wrong to no man.

“These four brothers were men of business, and they were all praying men. They were not impulsive people. I do not believe that they were given to shouting. Probably there are many in the Methodist Church who had more zeal and far less knowledge than the Harper Brothers. But the church never had four brothers — no, nor four laymen — of whom she might more justly be proud. I knew them many long years while they were in active life, and I was present at the funerals, I believe, of all of them ; but I never heard of the slightest thing to cast suspicion upon the integrity and fidelity to every trust of any one of the four. That is high praise of a large manufacturing house, employing hundreds of men and women and expending millions of dollars.

“The youngest of the four, Mr. Fletcher Harper, was addicted to the very agreeable habit of giving dinner-parties in his own house, where he gathered at his hospitable table literary men, clergymen and others. It came to this, that he made every Monday memorable by one of these delightful dinners. He had a few friends whom he distinguished by inviting them every week. They were the stock company. If a literary celebrity was in town, he was likely to be present on these occasions. There was no great ceremony about the dinner ; rarely any ladies but those of the family, — Mrs. Harper and her two daughters-in-law. The invited guests numbered generally from twelve to

fifteen. These are among the pleasantest social incidents of my life. Among the ministers often there were Dr. John M'Clintock, an accomplished scholar and gentleman, the historian of Methodism ; Dr. Abel Stevens ; Dr. George Crooks, now the distinguished professor in Drew Theological Seminary ; Dr. Hagenay, pastor of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church ; and Rev. W. H. Milburn, the blind preacher, one of the most entertaining of them all. The Methodist clergy were the most numerous of the guests, and I believe I was the only member of the stock company who was not also of the Wesleyan family. It was natural that the conversation should turn largely upon the moral and religious questions of the day, on new books and literary events, and the mingling of amusing anecdote was sufficiently frequent to make the feast eminently enjoyable. No party is ever more social and lively than a party of ministers, and of them the Methodist ministers easily bear the palm.

It was at this table that I became acquainted with the Rev. JOHN P. DURBIN, D. D., who was one of the burning and shining lights of the Methodist denomination. Tradition invests his name with a halo as one of the most brilliant and eloquent preachers which the American church has ever heard. I can readily believe it, as I heard him once when he was well on in years and was considered then as in the decay of his powers. We were having a series of religious services every Sabbath evening in the Academy of Music. Preachers of several denominations were invited in turn to preach. There was a strong desire on the part of some of the denominations that their favorite and most effective speakers should be selected ; and Dr. Durbin was invited. The Academy was thronged to excess. Every spot on which a person could sit or stand was occupied. The entire platform, in front of the chairs, was covered with people sitting on the floor. It was obvious that the Methodists had come in force to honor and to enjoy their great preacher, and he filled them with all the fulness of the richest

and loftiest religious eloquence. His theme was the dying love of Christ, and it furnished an opportunity for his most characteristic manner. After stating his plan and purpose with a simplicity and gentleness that gave no high promise of the good things to come, he advanced to the height of his great argument. Then it was a flow of soul, of melting tones and tears, caught up by the vast assembly in deepest sympathy, while he swayed them, roused, subdued, and thrilled them with wonderful effect. We were in a vale of tears. That indefinable rhetorical gift called *unction* was his in uncommon measure. Pathos was his forte, and when he had concluded it seemed to us all as if we were in the midst of a revival, and it was good to be there with Moses, Elias, and the Christ whose love and blood were now so precious."

"The Rev. JOHN M'CLINTOCK, D. D., took the platform on another Sabbath evening. His reputation as a pulpit orator was justly very high, perhaps above that of any Methodist preacher of that day. He was a fine scholar, more finished and artificial than Dr. Durbin, more intellectual and polished, and he was very popular. An immense audience filled the theatre, which held a thousand people more than get into the present Academy, taking the place of the old one that was burned. Dr. M'Clintock was a handsome man, dressed well, and made a fine appearance in public as well as in the social circle, which he charmed by his learning, wisdom, and wit. He was a man of the world in the sense of being familiar with its ways and the usages of society, and had a happy faculty of adapting himself to the people into whose company he was thrown. This sermon of his in the Academy was the only one I ever heard from him, and its majestic tones are ringing in my ear this moment as I recall the graceful, impassioned and impetuous manner of the speaker. He had perfect self-command, and at no moment in his delivery did he lose it and exhibit that *abandon* which is said to be essential to the most effective eloquence. Edward

Everett certainly had none of it, yet he could thrill an audience with periods as chaste as snow. Dr. M'Clintock strode through some of his sentences with grandeur of diction and gesture, enchaining the attention, while the clearness of the argument easily carried conviction to the understanding, and the splendor of the rhetorical appeal stirred the emotions and captured the heart. I would not draw a comparison between Drs. Durbin and M'Clintock, for they were too unlike to be compared. But it is truth to say that they were both consummate masters of pulpit eloquence and shining lights in the church they served and adorned.

“It is not becoming to speak of living men in the Methodist communion whose friendship I prize, and who are widely known in this and other lands. Our several ways of glorifying Christ in winning souls to his kingdom are such as God has given us, and in the great field of the world there are places for us all to fill. Christ's friends are mine always and everywhere ; and the only contention I want with any of them is to see who will do the most for the Master and live nearest to his heart. The friends whom I have named in this sketch have been dear to me on earth, and among the joys of Heaven I anticipate the blessedness of meeting my brethren, the Harper Brothers, and Terry, Durbin, and M'Clintock, glorified spirits, at the supper-table of Moses and the Lamb.”

**Part Sixth.**

DEATH AND COMMEMORATION.



## Part Sixth.

### DEATH AND COMMEMORATION.

#### LAST DAYS AND HOURS.

**D**URING the winter of 1885, Dr. Prime maintained all his usual intellectual pursuits and wrought in every direction with his wonted energy. But it was evident that his bodily vigor was not equal to the burdens which he had ever borne with such wonderful ease and cheerfulness. Without any premonition of serious illness, on the 4th of June he left the city with his wife to spend two or three weeks at Saratoga Springs and to fulfil an engagement to preach at Ballston Spa on the 7th, the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination and installation as the first pastor of the Presbyterian Church at that place. On the 1st of July he attended the Commencement at Williams College, of which he was a trustee. After tarrying for three or four days with a kinsman at his country home at White Creek, New York, and with a friend at Hoosick Falls, he started on Monday for Manchester, Vermont, to make arrangements to pass the month of August with his family at that place, where he expected to celebrate, on the 17th, the fiftieth anniversary of his marriage.

For several days he had been suffering occasionally from severe pain in the region of the liver. On his way

to Manchester it became so severe that on stepping from the cars and meeting his friend, the Rev. Dr. J. D. Wickham, he asked for a physician, and was introduced on the platform to Dr. Lewis H. Hemenway, who went with him directly to the Equinox House, and who was his faithful and skilful medical attendant until he breathed his last. The attack proved to be caused by congestion of the liver. It yielded readily to treatment, and before the end of the week he was nearly recovered. In the meantime he was joined by his wife and by his brother, William C. Prime, who had been summoned to his bedside, not from any apprehension that his illness was of an alarming character, but that he might have their presence while he should be confined at the hotel.

On Sunday morning, July 12, as Dr. Hemenway was leaving the room to attend public worship, Dr. Prime asked him to wait a moment and attempted to utter a request; but his eyes filled with tears and he said to his brother, "Give me the pencil and paper;" and he wrote, in bed, the following, which he desired the Doctor to hand to the pastor of the church: —

"TO THE PASTOR, — A stranger in town, being ill, desires the congregation to unite with him in thanks to God for his goodness in partially restoring him, and in praying for complete recovery."

And he added, for the eye of the pastor alone, "No name to be mentioned."

These were the last lines that his hand ever traced.

In the course of the day he engaged at intervals with his wife and brother in conversation on a variety of topics in which he was always deeply interested. Some of these subjects were: Attending upon divine service



on the Sabbath in order to worship God instead of merely to hear a sermon; The increasing evil tendency, especially in New England, of *hiring* ministers by the year instead of having pastors permanently installed. He talked with special delight on the *oneness of the faith* in various Christian churches that are separated by non-essential differences of opinion; of the modern theory of evolution as opposed to the teachings of the Bible; of the notion of many physiologists, and the practical evil effect of their doctrine, that the brain and not the soul does the thinking, and that man is a machine, and not a living spirit inhabiting a physical body. All this conversation was free and social, and not at all in the form of discussion or dogmatism. It was in perfect consonance with the calm, delightful, summer Sabbath-day, the heaven-sent breezes of which came in at the window and fanned him as he lay waiting for the messenger that was already at the door.

On Sunday afternoon, after sitting up for some time, he rose and walked with a firm step to the bed, and lying down quietly, closed his eyes and apparently fell asleep. The doctor entered a few moments after, and approaching the bedside, spoke to him, but received no answer. The mind which for more than seventy years had been active and communicative was to hold no more intercourse with the outer world. He recognized those who were around him, but he was never able to converse; he replied to questions only in monosyllables. On Monday morning his daughter, Mrs. Stoddard, and Rev. Dr. Charles A. Stoddard arrived and were recognized by him, by a significant look.

He lingered in this condition, suffering no pain and giving no signs of active consciousness, growing weaker

from day to day until Saturday, the 18th, at a quarter to one o'clock, when the wheel of life stood still, and he passed away so gently and peacefully that it was impossible to tell when his happy spirit left its tenement and went up to join the company of the redeemed in heaven.

#### FUNERAL SERVICES.

THESE were held on Wednesday, July 22, in the West Presbyterian Church, New York City, of which Dr. Prime had been a regular attendant for a number of years.

Although it was one of the hottest days of midsummer, in a comparatively deserted city, the church was crowded.

The body, enclosed in a black, cloth-covered coffin, was carried up the main aisle followed by the family of the deceased and the associate editors and employees of the "New York Observer." The plate upon the coffin bore the simple record:—

REV. SAMUEL IRENÆUS PRIME, D. D.

BORN NOVEMBER 4, 1812.

DIED JULY 18, 1885.

An open Bible, formed of white and yellow roses, with the inscription in blue violets, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (Rev. xiv. 13), was the only ornament; and this floral tribute came from those who had joined with Dr. Prime a few months before in celebrating his forty-fifth anniversary as the editor of the "New York Observer."

When all were seated, the beautiful poem of Phœbe Cary,

“One sweetly solemn thought,”

was sung by Miss Henrietta Beebe. Passages of Scripture were then read by Rev. Dr. Thomas S. Hastings, after which the hymn,

“Pilgrims of the night,”

was sung by the choir. Rev. Dr. John R. Paxton, the pastor of the church, then spoke as follows: —

“It is a great thing to live seventy-three years in this world, and thoroughly earn one’s grave, and leave a record without a blot, a name without a stain, and a character and career that make the whole country debtor to the dead.

“This is literally true of Dr. Prime. We are all in debt to him. When I was a lad in a country village, taking my first wondering view of books and papers, the ‘Irenæus Letters’ in the ‘New York Observer’ were the delight of my Sundays. Last week, over in Pennsylvania, at an old church in Cumberland Valley, it was told that ‘Irenæus’ was a-dying. ‘Alas!’ said an old lady, ‘he was my best preacher these forty years. His ‘Letters’ were a staff to help me through every week, bringing comfort and strength every time, and shedding light upon one’s way through this perplexing world.’

“This is the way it was all over the land, in ten thousand churches, and homes, and hearts, when the news was flashed by telegraph that Irenæus Prime was dying. I call this true fame, and a life well worth living. Dear friends, Dr. Prime was a great power in this land. For more than fifty years he has been by voice and pen on the side of every good cause that needed advocates and defenders in our country. He has preached to two generations the old story of the cross, and the principles and conduct of a useful, upright, and noble life. His name is a

household word, and his enduring fame is secure, like Washington's, in the hearts and gratitude of his countrymen. For I know of no man in this country, in the past fifty years, in public or private station, who has made a lasting mark for good on more minds than Dr. Prime. He entered the family, — the foundation of your churches and State. He inculcated a pure religion. He recommended Christianity to the young and old by the charm and grace and geniality of his nature and writings. Dr. Prime was no ascetic, seeing only the hard and gloomy side of life and religion, but at home with his Lord and Master at a wedding in Cana, where joy was unconfined, as well as tender and sympathetic at a funeral or in the house of mourning.

“Dr. Prime was conservative by nature and education, yet never a bigot or fanatic on any question agitated and debated in the land for half a century. I think, if all his letters were bound in a book, that if all his writings were examined, the most careful scrutiny would not find a line to expunge, or a page that his best friend would regret he wrote.

“The remarkable thing — the striking characteristic in Dr. Prime — was the well-balanced head he carried above his shoulders. He had no eccentricities. He had no pet virtue, no one little hobby, no one special excellence which he always aired and rung changes on. Nay, he was a broad-minded man; he had many windows to his mind; he took in light from every quarter, and thus could write and did write truthfully, charmingly, profitably, on all questions that engaged the interest or concerned the conduct of human life.

“Dr. Prime was well named ‘Irenæus.’ His life was an irenicon. He hated war. He loved peace, and studied peace and advocated peace in Church and State and family. Yet there was nothing weak or compromising in his nature or treatment of great questions or fundamental principles. When a principle was at stake he set his face like a flint, and, like Athanasius, would stand against the world. He would go two

miles with you any time out of courtesy, by the grace and consideration of a gentle and tolerant mind; but if anybody coerced him he would not budge an inch. If any impious hand touched the ark of God his voice was a menace and his attitude martial at once. 'Hands off!' he cried, 'and no trifling or liberties with the essential truths of Christianity, or the integrity of Holy Scripture as the inspired word of God.'

"Always by voice and pen Dr. Prime was the leading advocate of the evangelical Protestant faith in this country. He was thorough-going in his orthodoxy. He never would compromise with the Papacy, or with atheistic science, or the new liberal theology. But this is not the time or place to dwell upon the achievements of his long and distinguished life. On other occasions justice will be done his memory, and the church's debt to Dr. Prime clearly set down, as editor, preacher, presbyter, and author. Let it suffice to say, we have lost one of the best and wisest and most loyal and distinguished champions of Christianity in the land. When shall we see his like again? Who can take up the pen that wrote those unique and delightful 'Irenæus Letters' these many years, now that the hand that wielded it so cunningly and skilfully is stiff in death? Alas! alas! a great man and leader has fallen in Israel.

"It is a personal affliction. It is a calamity to the whole church. I may say that in a sense it is a national loss and sorrow; for in every State of the Union Dr. Prime had constituents, and worked righteousness and comforted hearts and fortified souls in virtue. For to-day, all over the land, there are tears and sorrow for 'Irenæus,' dead. Thank God for his noble life; for his long career; for his pure character; for his deep piety; for his fertile and brilliant pen; and his great influence in the widening lives of thousands whose steps he directed by his counsels, and whose hearts he strengthened by his unwavering faith in God. We loved him in life, for there was none more lovable, more genial, more kind; a hand always open, a heart always sweet, and a smile and tone that were

cheering as sunshine, and welcome as fresh air. We loved him in life, we mourn him dead, and will cherish his memory as an inspiration to high and noble aims and deeds.

“Thank God for one thing, that there was no decrepitude, no long invalidism, no period of wasting and suffering. No, he worked up to the last week ; his brain kept its clear light, his hand was firm at his desk, the best wine was at the last. Down to the end he did his day’s work, and with his hand on the plough he was called away to see the Lord in the Paradise of God, — that Master whom he loved supremely and served so faithfully for seventy-three years. There is nobody left just like him. He will have no successor. But long as this country endures and Christianity is prized, Dr. Irenæus Prime is sure of honor and fame for the good he accomplished, the life he lived, the God he glorified, — as citizen, preacher, editor, author, and man.

“May the unblotted record of his life, and the tears and sorrow of ten thousand souls in this country for one they admired and loved as teacher and helper in this life journey — may this record and their tears be the best consolation of the widow and children and friends of him who is now in heaven, but whose body is with us still.

“Dear friends, the question is, when a man dies, not how much money did he leave, nor how many enemies did he slay, nor how many machines did he invent, but how many hearts bled, how many tears were shed for him, how many mourned him dead. Judged by this test, no man had a wider fame.

“Farewell, father and friend, farewell !”

At the conclusion of Dr. Paxton’s address the Rev. Thos. S. Hastings, D. D., Professor in Union Theological Seminary, spoke as follows : —

“Often upon funeral occasions the pastor feels that the character and career need explanation or defence or eulogy. It is

not so to-day. We all know and honor and love the man whose loss we mourn, and need no one to introduce him to us. His life has been interwoven, to a degree rarely equalled, with the domestic, the ecclesiastical, and the public and civil life of our times. I remember that in my childhood I looked up to him with a peculiar reverence as that 'Irenæus' about whom so many good people were often talking. Then in early manhood I knew him as a controversialist, faithful and fearless in the cause of the truth as he understood it. In the trying times when discussion was hot, when thought clashed with thought, and feeling grappled with feeling, the gentle pen of 'Irenæus' became keen and quick alike in ward and in thrust. It was like that old legend which claimed that the Damascus blade gave forth both sparks and perfume. Then when I came to this city as a young pastor, many years ago, I confess I was surprised and delighted to discover the tenderness of his heart and the warmth of his sympathy. To a very wide constituency of the best people he was known only through his facile and graceful pen. But if you knew him in that way only you did not really know him. If you have not seen him with his children and grandchildren about him; if you have not seen him in the freedom of private, unconstrained fellowship with his brethren loved and trusted; if you have not seen him touched to the heart by the appeal of suffering and sorrow, then you have not really known him. With him how easy and quick was the transition from smiles to tears! In the best sense, only the earnest can be mirthful; only the strong can be tender.

"We must not think to-day only of our loss; we must look at the other side, toward the home which he has just entered. In Guizot's words, 'the dawn of the eternal day which fools call death,' — what a dawn it has been to our friend and brother! As I was journeying hither to-day to attend this service, amid the crowd, alone with the thought of this friend, I wrote down, one after another, the names of distinguished ministers who have died since I began my professional life here, nearly thirty years

ago. Slowly the list increased, as I recalled one loved face after another, until I had thirty names — brilliant and blessed names — with all of whom our departed brother had enjoyed close and familiar fellowship. He was always bright and charming in such intercourse. I am sure the laity do not know how stimulating, refreshing, and delightful is the personal and professional fellowship enjoyed by the ministry in this city. How much better it must be in heaven ! As I looked again at my list it touched me to see how I had these noble names grouped without reference to the denominations they represented. There were Methodists and Baptists and Episcopalians and Congregationalists, and Presbyterians all intermingled, and I could not help saying, So heaven will have it ; only earth can keep such men separate. How rich is heaven becoming ! How many well-known hands have been stretched out to welcome the coming of our brother ! Oh ! it is a goodly company which is fast gathering on high, to which each new-comer is welcomed with a joy in strong contrast with the sorrow here. We must not look backward or downward, but onward and upward. Our brother is not dead. ‘In his own order,’ at his appointed time, the Lord has called him higher. I recall the quaint but touching verse of Baxter : —

“ ‘As for my friends, they are not lost ;  
The several vessels of thy fleet  
Tho’ parted now, by tempests tost,  
Shall safely in the haven meet.’ ”

“ We thank God for what our brother was and for what he has done, and trust in our turn, through infinite grace, to follow where he has been permitted to go before us. So is our sorrow full of gratitude and hope.

“ ‘Alas for him who never sees  
The stars shine thro’ his cypress trees.’ ”

The assembly then united with the Rev. William Ormiston, D. D., in a fervent and comforting prayer,



after which the hymn "Jerusalem the Golden," a favorite hymn of Dr. Prime, was sung by the choir, and after the benediction had been pronounced the family retired.

Then the coffin was opened and the long procession of friends took their last look upon the calm and venerable face of "Irenæus." In the afternoon the interment was made privately in Dr. Prime's lot at Woodlawn Cemetery.

#### MEMORIAL SERVICES.

ON Tuesday evening, Jan. 5, 1886, a service in memory of the late Rev. S. Irenæus Prime, D. D., was held under the direction of the Evangelical Alliance of the United States, at Association Hall, in the city of New York. The audience filled the main floor of the hall, and overflowed into the galleries, and sat with unwearied attention during the exercises, which occupied almost two hours.

Among those present were clergymen of all denominations, bankers, merchants, and lawyers and ladies eminent in social life and philanthropic endeavor. It was an assemblage representative of the best elements of New York life. An admirable portrait in oil of Dr. Prime was hung in the rear of the platform, and was a source of much pleasure to those who awaited the hour of opening.

At eight o'clock Mr. William E. Dodge, President of the Alliance, took the chair. Seated with him upon the platform were the following gentlemen: President McCosh of Princeton College, Bishop Harris, of the Methodist Episcopal church, the Rev. R. S. Storrs, D. D.,

the Rev. Henry M. Field, D. D., the Rev. Edward Bright, D. D., the Rev. Wm. M. Taylor, D. D., the Rev. Thomas Armitage, D. D., the Rev. O. H. Tiffany, D. D., the Rev. C. C. Tiffany, D. D., the Rev. A. C. Wedekind, D. D., the Rev. Wm. T. Sabine, D. D., the Hon. John Jay, Vice-Chancellor McCracken, of the University of the City of New York; Professor Buell, of the General Theological Seminary; General Clinton B. Fisk, the Rev. George L. Shearer, D. D., of the American Tract Society; the Rev. W. W. Atterbury, D. D., of the Sabbath Committee; the Rev. Samuel H. Hall, D. D., of the Seamen's Friend Society; the Rev. Henry B. Chapin, D. D., the Rev. Erskine N. White, D. D., the Rev. A. H. Burlingame, D. D., the Rev. N. W. Conkling, D. D., the Rev. John Forsyth, D. D., and others.

Prayer was offered by the Rev. A. C. Wedekind, D. D. The Rev. Arthur Brooks, D. D., then read the following hymn, which was sung by the audience to the tune of "Rest":—

"The city of the Lord I see,  
Beyond the firmament afar;  
Its every dome a noonday sun,  
And every pinnacle a star.

"How shall I scale those shining heights,  
And in his beauty see the King,  
And hear the anthems of the skies,  
Those songs celestial voices sing?

"Lead me, thou spotless Lamb of God,  
And place me near thy wounded side,  
With thee in glory let me live,  
Immortal, since thou once hast died.

“Thou art my Saviour ! there is none  
But thee on whom I dare rely ;  
For thee, O Christ, 'tis mine to live,  
In thee my joy shall be to die.

“Then, while this crumbling body sleeps  
In hope beneath its native sod,  
My soul, redeemed, will rise to see  
The shining city of my God !”

Mr. William E. Dodge then said : —

“ We are met to-night in a very peculiar and tender service. There are loving memories here of a dear friend, who lived a long, useful, honorable life, and has gone on before us to the Father's house. And there will be tears in some eyes to-night. But this is not a sad or a funeral service, but rather one of rejoicing and thanksgiving for the brave, true life that was loyally lived and that has left a great example and influence. Of all that our dear friend Dr. Prime was and did, you will hear to-night from friends who loved him. For the Evangelical Alliance the loss is a great and terrible one. He was one of the founders of the Alliance ; he has always been an earnest and faithful worker in its service and an officer on its committees. Thoroughly loyal to his own communion, he still had a broad view, a broad, loving, catholic heart that could take in all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ. I think this is the first special service ever held by the Alliance the arrangements of which were not largely cared for by him. It is very strange to us to look about this platform to-night and not to see his genial, interested face. But there is a significance in his absence perhaps more eloquent than if he were here. He is gone before us, and he understands the full meaning of the unity of saints. He knows just how little the differences are now in which he believed so little when he was on earth. If he were to come, an angelic visitor, to-night, from that radiant home where he is,

and could stand on this platform with the light of the city of God on his face, how eloquently, and how earnestly, and how convincingly he would tell us that these little differences that prejudice and association, and accident even, have placed between Christian brethren on earth are as nothing, and that the whole family in heaven and on earth is one.

“We shall hear now from the Rev. Dr. Schaff the paper prepared by the Alliance commemorative of the death of our dear friend. Before reading that, however, the Rev. Dr. Atterbury will read a few letters received from those who were unable to be present with us, and to take a personal part in this service of love.”

The Rev. W. W. Atterbury, D. D., then read extracts from some of the many letters, and the Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D., LL. D., followed with the paper prepared for and adopted by the Evangelical Alliance. After reading the paper Dr. Schaff added: —

“It is in obedience to this invitation that we meet to-night to commemorate and to pay our last respects to a good man, one who filled a very prominent post for many years faithfully, usefully, and efficiently. I heard of the death of Dr. Prime, while I was in Germany, from the lips of his friend ex-Governor Hoffman, who had read a telegram in ‘Galignani’s Messenger’ announcing his sudden death in Vermont. The news cast a cloud of sadness over my mind; for I lost in him not only an esteemed colleague, but also a dear friend. We co-operated together as secretaries for twenty years in the Evangelical Alliance, especially in connection with the Conference which took place twelve years ago in this very building and the surrounding churches, and which will not be easily forgotten. And week after week I met him in a private circle of clerical friends and brethren. There he was always welcome, and contributed much to our entertainment by his genial humor, his ready wit,

his inexhaustible store of entertaining anecdotes, his large experience and knowledge of the world and of the church and his general sympathies. He will long be missed in public and in private. But let us not look down to the dust where his mortal remains are slumbering, but upward to the heaven where our dear brother Prime is now enjoying his peace and the reward for his useful labors."

The Rev. Richard S. Storrs, D. D., then spoke as follows: —

"MR. PRESIDENT, BRETHREN OF THE ALLIANCE, CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, — It would have been a great pleasure to me if it had been possible, in the haste of my life, and the multiplicity of my cares, to present a far more elaborate and comprehensive sketch of the life of Dr. Prime, and of his character and work, than will be possible in the brief and, I fear, somewhat desultory remarks which I shall make this evening. I am glad, however, to do what I may to express my sincere honor for him, my sympathy with those from whom he has gone, and my sense of the great service which he has rendered to the Christian church throughout his life, by his writings and labors.

"I have a peculiar feeling of embarrassment in standing here, and speaking of him, which I do not remember to have had, certainly in the same degree, on any similar occasion in my experience. It arises from the feeling that he is still living and present; from the inability which I suffer to realize that he is finally gone from the scenes and the societies in which he rejoiced, and to which he added so much of gladness and of charm. I was absent from the city at the time when he passed from the hills of the earth to the celestial mountains. I was still absent when the funeral services were held in the church in which he was accustomed to worship. And in spite of the testimony of those who were with him, or of those who were present on that occasion, I cannot dissociate him from the life here in which he mingled so actively and usefully, so joyfully,

and so long. Perhaps, however, this embarrassment of mine explains in part, the secret of the hold which he had upon so many minds. The source of it was, largely, no doubt, in the vivacity and freshness, the eagerness and abundance of life, which always were in him. He touched life at many points, because he had in himself such a rich, radiant, and energetic experience of it. He had inherited this from those who went before him, — from those from whom his life was derived. My father, in the earlier years of his ministry, labored upon Long Island, as his grandfather had done before him for many years, and as his son after him has been called, by God's providence, to do. My father knew the father and the mother of Dr. Prime — though he was younger by two or three years, perhaps, than the Rev. Nathaniel Prime — while they were at Huntington and he was at Islip. He has often spoken to me of the admiring esteem and affectionate honor in which he held those friends of his youth, the parents of him who is now gone into the skies. I do not know that his relations with them were ever intimate; and in later years he certainly did not meet them. But those impressions of his earlier life remained upon him until the end, and his reference to them was not infrequent when he was with me at my house, or when the name of Dr. Prime was mentioned.

“Our friend inherited from those parents the variety, versatility, quickness of intellectual force which he always manifested, and much, I think, of the social temper and the sweet and sympathetic spirit which also was in him, as well as of his native tact in dealing with difficult questions or refractory men. I have heard him express more than once, in conversation, the sense of this deep and various indebtedness to those from whom his life had been drawn. From them came to him, as well, that positive and strong religious tendency which led him to the fullest faith in the evangelical truth, and in the Divine Master who is the crown and glory of that truth as it exhibits Him to the world. He was constitutionally fitted for civic life — to be a

citizen in a great community — by the ardor of his spirit, by his instinctive power of judging men, by his interest in great movements and great institutions ; and his life was happily cast in the scenes which were most appropriate to it, when he was brought in the providence of God into contact with so many eminent persons and great activities of the social and religious world. He was fitted both by nature and by grace to exert in such surroundings a large, healthful, enduring influence.

“ The constant youthfulness of his spirit is exhibited to me, as much as by any other fact, by the fact that I find it almost impossible now to realize that it is nearly forty years since I first met him, and that he was then nearly approaching middle life. It was soon after my entrance upon my work in Brooklyn that I met him at the house of a common friend, at a dinner party. I was the youngest of the company, and probably he hardly recognized my presence ; but I remember perfectly the ready and racy expression of his opinions, as one question after another was mooted in conversation, with that fulness of anecdote and of personal reminiscence to which Dr. Schaff has referred, and the genial wit and graceful humor which sparkled in his speech. I felt at the time that he was one of the most delightful dinner companions that I had met, and I hoped that it might be my privilege to meet him often afterward in similar circumstances. That did not, however, happen to me. Although, subsequently to that, he lived for seven or eight years, I think, in the city of Brooklyn, his work was different from mine, and we were both busy men. He was of another communion from mine ; our views on many questions which then agitated the public mind were widely diverse ; and if now and then we met in company or met on the street, my acquaintance with him at that time was intermittent, occasional, hardly satisfactory. Yet I always retained that first impression, that as a person for cheerful conversation — gracefully flowing, yet animated, instructive, and full of charm — he was one of the very few.

“ But it would be a great mistake to suppose that he was merely

a man of society — even of Christian society — or a mere conversationalist. He was a man of remarkable force of mind and will. I remember, more than thirty years ago, hearing him deliver an address in the University Place Presbyterian Church in this city — after he had been Corresponding Secretary of the Bible Society — upon the distribution of the Scriptures, which seemed to me of very unusual force and comprehensiveness. Perhaps I felt this the more because it was my misfortune to be called to follow him, and he seemed to me to have occupied the whole ground in the address which he had made. I have met him, too, again and again in public discussion; and I always found him a most efficient assistant if he was upon my side, a very dangerous antagonist if he was not. I remember vividly one great discussion in this city, in the councils of a prominent national institution, where we differed entirely, and where he carried the vote — against my judgment then, and against my judgment now — by a singularly apt and effective quotation. As I thought at the time, and think now, it had no real appropriateness to the subject, though of course to him it seemed entirely germane and apt; but he threw it in the faces of the opposing party so suddenly and dexterously that they could not answer it, and he swept the vote of that large body of Directors by the quotation more than by the force of the argument behind it, which I must at the same time admit was an argument of virile force and fitness.

“I never had the pleasure of hearing him preach, as it happened, until about ten years ago or a little more, when I was spending a summer at Litchfield, and he was also at the same village, not far from me. Then, I think not in a funeral service, but in connection with the death of a friend of each of us — the Hon. Judge Woodruff of this city — he preached a sermon upon the spiritual life and its heavenly consummation, which seemed to me of very rare beauty, power, and spiritual richness. I remember that I felt at the time that if he had been permitted to continue his comparatively brief early pastorate, and to remain



in the work of the ministry in the pulpit, he would be an admirable public teacher by the voice, as certainly he would have been a most engaging and delightful pastor.

“But of course, his particular work in the world was the work of an editor. When I first met him he had already been for four or five years connected with the ‘New York Observer.’ I remember a letter of his, written I don’t know how many years ago, but certainly thirty-three or four, from Hartford, Connecticut, in connection, I believe, with a meeting of the American Board, — certainly with some great Christian convocation which was being held in that city. I have never seen the letter from the time I read it until now. It is not included, I am sure, in either of the volumes of the series of his letters published in book-form; but I remember it still as a singularly graceful and poetic description of impressive natural phenomena, — a brilliant and wonderful sunset following a storm; and, at the same time, as conveying a vividly descriptive account of the great assembly whose sessions he was attending, with characteristic notices or sketches of distinguished individuals whom he there met and heard. The other day, in taking up one of the volumes of his letters, as recently republished, I came upon one letter called ‘The Heart of the Catskills,’ which reminded me of that earlier letter from Hartford, in its poetic appreciation of the marvellous beauty and majesty of nature, in its graphic, graceful, and picturesque rendering of this in verbal expression, and in the spiritual feeling which suffused it.

“He was a born editor, predestinated to it from before the foundation of the world, according to his own admirable theology. He had, as an editor, two powers which singularly fitted him for service and success in that profession, — the one, the power of distinct apprehension of thought, distinct presentation to his own mind of affirmative opinion; and the other, the power of graceful, vigorous, rapid, and engaging expression of . . . such thought in language. One might not always agree with his opinion. I did not. I sometimes even vehemently dissented

from opinions which to him were true and important. But one always knew what the opinion was. And when it concerned matters of grave and serious importance, the subjects of Christian truth, or of spiritual duty, life, and experience, his opinions were uniformly sound. One might differ from him in regard to measures, in regard to institutions, in regard to men, not infrequently; but when he touched the higher subjects with which the soul-life is concerned, then one rarely found occasion to dissent from that which was held and taught by our beloved and honored friend.

“And he had, as I have suggested, the power of manifesting his thought to others through a style singularly perspicuous and attractive. Men sometimes suspected, perhaps, that there was less of power in this style because the motion of it was so fluent and easy. But that easy motion came from the conscious natural strength which belonged to the style because it first belonged to the man. His style was like himself,—individual, graceful, spontaneous, idiomatic. When you met him on the street, his smile lighted the street for half a block. When you met him in a room, or a social assembly, or on the platform, his benignant face cast a sunshine on all that looked upon it, a sunshine which even this admirable portrait behind me can hardly fully reproduce. And his style was like the man. It was pleasing and engaging, but it had a prompt energy in it. He wrote readily, he wrote rapidly; he wrote punctually and systematically. He wrote at the unceasing call of the press; and, at the same time, he wrote with that copious, spontaneous liberty and impulse which it was beautiful to see. In one of his letters, I think, he quotes an image from some one, of a mind which shines like a meteor when it is in motion, but becomes obscured in proportion as it becomes quiet and ceases to move. I should not certainly ascribe any meteoric splendor to the style of Dr. Prime — he would have desired no such unmeet compliment. There was nothing fantastic in it — nothing pyrotechnic — nothing in the least flagrant or sensational. But the expression

of his thought moved rather like a mountain stream, — clear, pellucid, with an easy and musical motion, quickening when it encountered obstruction, sparkling into foam as it rippled over impediments or entered into controversy with any resistance, while with all its facile grace it was ready to set an unfailing strength beneath the wheels of great movements, and to stir to fresh activity the mighty machineries of public institutions, advancing whatever measures of policy engaged his mind and attracted his heart. It was a style admirably adapted to the perspicuous and copious expression of opinion, and to the impression of that opinion upon those who read it. He tells the story somewhere, I remember, of a sexton in a church, who loved, he said, to hear long words in the sermon, such words as would ‘jumble your judgment and confound your sense.’ Well, those were two things which, whatever else Dr. Prime did or did not do, he never did, — he never jumbled one’s judgment or confounded his sense. But he uniformly expressed his opinion, whatever the value and importance of that opinion, in such a clear and enlivening fashion that every one saw what it was and felt the full impression of it.

“Thus he made himself friends with those who habitually read his writings, in an almost unexampled degree. They felt that they were meeting the thought and the experience of a disciplined mind, conversant with affairs, largely and freshly contemplative of truth ; and that that thought was being expressed to them in the most delightful, picturesque, and attractive manner. Therefore they felt toward him as a personal friend ; and I do not doubt that it is true that all over this country, and in Europe as well, there are those who had never seen his face, who still felt the shock of a personal sadness when it was said to them that Dr. Prime had departed out of life on the earth.

“He did more than this. By this transparency of style, and this clearness and openness of affirmative opinion, he impressed himself upon his paper, so as to make it a mirror of his mind ; and he gave to it especially the tone of that mind, a religious

and churchly tone ; he did this to a degree that has hardly been paralleled, so far as my observation goes, among the religious journals of the country. Others may have surpassed his in the brilliancy and elaborateness of particular articles, in the brilliancy and comprehensiveness of particular departments ; but I doubt if one can find another paper in which there is so much of the atmosphere of serious thought, of sober reflection, of the conscientious conviction of duty, and of reverent worship, as there has been in the paper under his conduct these many years. It became a kind of printed church, in which one might tarry and reflect, commune with fine minds, and worship God. So it attracted serious readers in all communions. While he was loyal to his own church and to his peculiar forms of faith, men in other communions, many and various, delighted to read whatever he wrote, and were refreshed and quickened, instructed and uplifted, as they read. The paper not only attracted to itself such serious minds, but it deepened this tone of seriousness and thoughtfulness in those who read it. It became in fact a kind of modern 'Book of Acts' to a multitude of Christian households. You might tell beforehand, without further inquiry, the character of a family into which the 'Observer' was wont to go. The story is told, I believe, of some sailors shipwrecked on a coral island in the Pacific, who were fearful of cannibal cruelties, and were shrinking and cowering in the thickets till they heard afar the distant echo of a church bell. Instantly they were relieved of fear, knew themselves at home, and rushed to greet the Christian society whose existence had thus been indicated to them. So one might go into any remotest village of the land, into any hamlet, into any humblest and rudest house, and if he found the 'Observer' on the table he might know at once that there was a serious, intelligent, God-fearing family, which worshipped God on the Lord's day, and which delighted to read of Him, and of His wonderful works in the world, in the secular days of the week.

"Of course, it is quite impossible to over-estimate the influ-

ence exerted by such a man, through such a journal, continuing so long and reaching so far in circulation. No newspaper can take the place of a profound treatise on theology, or ethics, or philosophy, or church history. We must have these, of course ; but at the same time the newspaper, representing the substance of what has been contained in the treatise, and putting it into form for general currency, gives wings to the thought which has elsewhere been more largely and finely elaborated. The mint-master who sets upon the coin its stamp, with the proper image and superscription, and puts it into general circulation in the world, has his important and valuable office as well as the miner who has dug the gold from the earth, or blasted it from the rock. The man from whom comes the coal for my winter fireside-blaze, or who distils that coal into the lights which change night into day along the great avenues of the city, has his place in the world, and an important one, as well as the swart miner who has dug out the coal from under the base of the towering mountain. And the journal which gives currency to truth and thought, as these have been elaborated in the profound or careful treatise, having access to multitudinous minds, gives wings to the treatise. The newspaper cannot take the place, either, of oral discourse, in which the spirit of the speaker, touched by a divine fire, goes forth upon his utterance. Our friend would have been the first to admit this, the first to declare it. Our Master wrote no sentence, so far as we are informed — unless he wrote one in the sand. He spake much, and he said himself that the words spoken by him were to outlast the heavens and the earth. Preaching is to convert the world, under the Divine grace, and not newspapers. But where the elaborate treatise exists, and where the inspiring preaching is found, there the newspaper becomes — if it be right in religious tone, and right in its religious teaching — a constant and an invaluable auxiliary power, giving strength to the hand, giving warmth to the heart, giving vision to the brain, of him who teaches from the pulpit, of those who bear office in the church, or of those associated in its fellowship.

“Our brother felt his responsibility for this. He knew that the religious newspaper gives this tone to the family, — to the family thought and the family life ; that it suggests manifest questions for reflection and inquiry, themes for thought and for further investigation ; that it guides and quickens the conversation of households. And he knew that such conversation largely governs the world ; not great addresses, not mighty volumes, not even newspaper discussions in themselves, but the conversation which goes on in your family and in mine, and in all the households of this city and of the land, — that is the power which really controls the moral life, the social life, even the public and political development of all our communities. And the newspaper does a large part of its work by touching this conversation at its springs, suggesting its subjects, guiding the directions of thought expressed in it, quickening and animating, instructing and enriching what is so mighty a power in the world. It puts gems of thought, too, into the keeping of many minds to whom they would have been unfamiliar, or positively unknown, except for the medium furnished by the journal. Our friend recognized his responsibility for this work, and wrought with all his might, in the ardor of his spirit, to make his paper one worthy of the truth which it maintained and defended, worthy of the Master whom it sought to serve, worthy as an instrument of spiritual good to the multitudes of souls to which it brought its instruction and its impulse.

“He felt the dignity of his profession. Lord Bacon says, you remember, in the preface to his ‘Maxims of the Law,’ that he holds every man a debtor to his profession ; that since it gives him countenance and profit, he ought on the other hand to add to it whatever he may of help and of ornament. Our brother rejoiced in the fact that he was connected with so prominent and influential a journal, consecrated to the service of truths so great, and circulating so widely. And when he had become the ‘Dean of the Faculty’ — the oldest, I should think, in his position among the editors of the city — he re-

joiced, as he looked back upon the past, to remember the work which he had wrought, and rejoiced to bring whatever of fame and gracious distinction his name could give to the work editorial. He recognized the dangers of the editorial life. There are dangers here, as there are dangers in all departments of life ; dangers in the ministerial life, dangers in the commercial, dangers more than all in the life of leisure. There are dangers of their own kind in the editorial life, — the danger of swift and superficial thinking, as well as writing, on important subjects ; the danger of a temper of arrogant imperiousness in speaking of opponents ; the danger of excessive partisanship, for or against opinions or men. As far as men may, he avoided these dangers, and kept himself free from whatever influences were adverse to sweetness and righteousness of spirit. There are also educating powers in the editorial life. It widens the view ; it widens the mind ; it makes men conversant with persons and measures, and great societies, and sensitive to the subtler drifts and movements of public thought ; wise and quick in discerning tendencies, and often full of tact and power in mastering or guiding such tendencies as they rise. He was thus educated by his work, — educated into superior fitness for the office which he held in this institution, and into like fitness for the offices which he held in many others. Conversant with the world he was, and not a scholastic or pedantic recluse, — familiar with men and practical measures, and not merely familiar with the lore of books. And he derived that in part from the profession in which his life was so gladly and usefully spent.

“ I think in looking back upon his life that the one word which describes it better than another is that word which also describes the counterfeit presentment that stands behind me, of the face which is no more here, — the word ‘ sunny.’ There may have been griefs, burdens, and disappointments in his life — of which I know nothing whatever ; but the impression he always made upon one was that of a singularly cheerful temperament, cheerful and social, easy and elegant in his fashion of

work, doing the work gladly, doing it rapidly, doing it, not as under constraint, but in heartiest joy of it all the time. I remember an occasion in Litchfield, during the same summer to which I have referred, when this impression, more distinctly than ever, was made upon me. I asked him one evening, in the name of many of those who were tarrying at the hotel with me, to come from his lodgings, not far off, and conduct for us an evening service of praise; a request to which he readily assented. As I remember it, he read first one or two, or, perhaps, three hymns of worship, connected especially with the Sabbath day, which were sung; then some passages of Scripture, followed by prayer, — the Scriptures referring principally to the invitations of Christ, and especially to the invitation to rest in him. Hymns succeeded, expressive of the conscious and sweet rest of the Christian heart in the Redeemer; introduced and followed by remarks concerning those hymns, and concerning the ultimate Christian rest to be reached in heaven. Then hymns were announced relating to the heavenly life, and the beloved who possess it; at the close of all he read that marvellous hymn of Bernard of Cluny, part of which is printed, I see, upon this programme, — ‘Jerusalem the Golden.’ He read many stanzas, many more than are here, many more than are in any of our hymn-books — read them with the greatest fervor and sweetness, with a beautiful intonation, and a more beautiful outgoing of the spirit on every intonation, until at last, as he closed we all felt, I know, that we were standing but just outside the celestial gates, that the cross was shining on the dome of that evening service, that we had almost seen the Lord in his glory; and that the golden stars overhead were not more real than the golden streets of which the victorious hymn had told us.

“He who then led the service has passed into those gates before us, as has already been said. We tarry for a little behind. But it is beautiful to recall his life here, — his spirit of sympathy with whatever was best, his consecration to the su-



preme ends, in labors connected with the welfare of the world and the glory of the Divine Redeemer, — beautiful to remember that he passed in such serenity, with the celestial light shining on him, from amidst the embosoming hills of Vermont to the paradise above. We well may pray that our last end may be like his ; and we well may write upon his tombstone that epitaph which he preferred, he said, beyond every other : ‘ The Lord is my light and my salvation ; the Lord was the strength of my life, and He has become my portion forever ! ’ ”

The Rev. Edward Bright, D. D., editor of the “*Examiner*,” then said : —

“ With all truth and sincerity I can say that I agree with everything that Dr. Storrs has said with reference to the estimable man whose memory we honor to-night. No one could have drawn such a picture of Dr. Prime as Dr. Storrs has done unless he had studied him very closely. And although Dr. Storrs may not have been so much in his society, yet evidently he knew the man, and knew him perfectly ; and he has described him fully and justly. I knew Dr. Prime during the last thirty years of his life. I came here thirty years ago. I came to do just such a work as he has been doing, — editing a newspaper. We were of different denominations, but very soon after I came I was introduced to him ; and the acquaintance ripened into friendship, and the friendship into intimacy, and that into what was nothing less than a confidential friendship. And one of the things that I prize more than I can tell to-night is that I had such a friendship and such an acquaintance and such a sympathy with a man so admirable as was Dr. Prime.

“ He was one of the manliest of men, sincere and true and noble. All his aims were noble. If there was anything in him that was crooked, anything that was deceitful, I never saw it or had a mistrust of it. He was frank to the last degree, with a frankness that was never rude, always kind and true. He was

a genuine man. And one of the sources of his power, as I believe, was that he was always satisfied to be himself. He never sought to be anybody else. He knew perfectly that he could not be fashioned by any possible contrivance into a McCosh, and he never tried to be a McCosh. He could no more have been made such a man than Dr. McCosh could have been made an Irenæus Prime. They were totally different, and each was admirable in his way. I think that that trait to which reference has been made, the sunniness of Dr. Prime's character and intercourse with men, was one of the most delightful sources of his power.

“But besides being a manly man, he was one of the truest of Christian men. His religion was his controlling power. His religion was of a stamp that had not much to do with the length of his face or the tones of his voice. It had its seat in his consciousness and in his heart, and the thing that regulated that consciousness and the affections of that heart was the Christianity that he believed in as he believed in his own salvation. He was a genuine Christian man. And he was not the kind of Christian that thinks every other denomination on the earth is just as good as the one that he belongs to. He was too much of a man to admit any such thing as that. He was a Presbyterian by choice and by conviction, and he could not have been anything else than a Presbyterian. But while he was a devout and sincere Presbyterian, he was one of the most catholic of men so far as other men's religious opinions were concerned. He believed that every other man had the same right to his choice as he himself had. He and I often differed, but never in a single instance, either in the papers or in conversation, was there a word uttered that marred the friendship and the love and the confidence and the intimacy on either side. He was just as willing I should be a Baptist as I was he should be a Presbyterian, and we agreed to differ. And we loved each other, not because he was what he was in that respect, or I what I was, but because we both believed and delighted in the

great fundamental truths of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. No man was truer to an honest interpretation of God's Book, with reference to those great fundamental truths, than Dr. Prime. He did not know much about anything relating to any other theology, or any other theory, than that which he found in that Book, the blessed Word of God, — the atonement of Jesus Christ in its sacrificial and vicarious character, the work of the Spirit in renovating the heart, and the inspiration of the Scriptures. Those great and fundamental truths which lie at the very basis of our Christianity no man honored in his heart and in his words and in his life more than Dr. Prime.

“I agree with Dr. Storrs heartily when he says that Dr. Prime had by instinct — by predestination if you please — the qualities of the best class of editors. He was in a certain respect a great editor, and he made the ‘Observer’ a great paper. But the man could never have read his letters, his ‘Irenæus Letters,’ never have known anything about him socially and personally, who did not say the ‘Observer’ was from the beginning to the end filled with his own personality and spirit. If there is a personal journal or has been a personal journal anywhere within the last forty years, it is the ‘New York Observer.’ It has been Dr. Prime from the beginning to the end. And what a power it has exerted! Probably the ‘New York Observer’ has had a hundred thousand readers every week for the last forty years, and the reading has been done in all the nations of the earth. Estimate, if you can, the influence of such a man that sends forth once a week his best thoughts, his best feelings, his best aspirations into so many thousand families. What a congregation! And yet he did this with an enthusiasm that was as warm and as sunny in the last year of his life as it ever had been. He was one of the sunniest men that I ever knew. I have met him in social life, in religious life, in editorial life, and I can say with the utmost sincerity, as Dr. Storrs has said, I never lost a friend regarding whom I found it more difficult to convince myself that he was dead than Dr. Prime. I went into the office of

the 'Observer' two or three days ago, and I was possessed with the idea of his presence. There was something that said to me, 'Dr Prime is here ; I shall see him.' And go where I will and think of him as I may, I cannot think of him as one that is dead. But he is gone. He lived to see the sunny side of seventy, the side on which the New Jerusalem is, the haven of eternal rest ; the side on which the church of the first-born is ; the side on which Jerusalem the golden is, as is expressed in what was his favorite hymn ; and it was a Jerusalem to which he could say, in the language of that hymn : ' I hope for thee, I wish for thee, I sigh for thee.' And he is there to-night, enjoying all that he hoped for, all that he wished for, all that he sighed for. And I presume there are a great many of us here to-night that expect to meet him there, that expect to know him there, that expect to enjoy more together there than we could have enjoyed here. I should be sorry to believe that I should not know and hold communion sweet and loving with Dr. Prime in heaven."

The Rev. James M. Buckley, D.D., editor of the "Christian Advocate," then spoke as follows : —

"We are not here to bury Dr. Prime, but to praise him,—nevertheless in the spirit of him who said, 'He was a faithful man, and one that feared God above many.' Dr. Prime has given the secret of his own life in a very few words. He says : 'Nearly forty years ago I stumbled on a sentence by Ferguson, that "the lustre which a man casts about him is like the flame of a meteor, which shines only while its motion continues. The moments of rest and obscurity are the same."' This, I fancy, is the passage to which Dr. Storrs incidentally referred ; and on this Dr. Prime observes : 'That made a deep impression on my mind. I copied it out ; I committed it to memory.' And he then says that he deduced from it two principles. In his own language these were : 'first, Rest and Obscurity are twins ; and second, in

this day of all days unceasing labor is the price of success.' And from these two principles, he says, he deduced two rules, — in his own language : ' no day without something learned ; no day without something done.' Yet were this the only secret of his life, he might have been as learned and as selfish as Voltaire.

" I suppose most of this assembly were, in a certain sense, his personal friends. It is not necessary to know a man's face to be his friend. It is possible to love a man whom one never saw. So, I say, I assume that the youngest and the oldest and all between are conscious of a peculiar friendship for Dr. Prime. And most of us have read his ' Letters.' I read them from my boyhood. I know hundreds of them ; and the sweetest of them is that one entitled, ' Strawberries and Cream ; or The Blessings of Giving and Receiving Compared.' In that letter he says that twenty years ago, in his country place up the Hudson, not far from this city, he had a number of friends at dinner, and they had strawberries of his own raising ; and, said Dr. Prime : ' Their size excited the admiration of the party. Some one observed that he had seen strawberries so large they could not be made to pass through a napkin ring. The experiment was made and every one had strawberries before him that would lie quietly on the top of the ring. Then the conversation turned to the prolific qualities of the vine, and one stated that a single root had been known to produce three hundred berries. This was quite as surprising as the size of the strawberries, and by and by we made a personal visitation of the garden and found plenty of vines with more than three hundred berries on a single root. Thus in size and number these equalled anything hitherto reported.

" ' Among my guests,' he says, ' was a newspaper man, who made a note of what he saw and printed it. The story was deemed incredible. A pastor in the West was so shocked by the exaggeration, as he considered it, that he caused to be published an offer to supply the Synod of Ohio with plants if I would send him some specimens and they produced such fruits.

In response to this challenge I made the public offer to send by mail, postpaid, and without any charge, specimens of the plants to every person in the United States who would send me his post-office address! And he says: 'Including what plants were sent for by neighbors and friends and taken away personally, it was calculated that we gave away in the course of the month of August more than three thousand strawberry-plants. Twenty years ago those plants went into the rural regions of this wide country. And from that time to this they have gladdened more families than I shall ever hear of.

" 'And now,' he states, with an inimitable touch of pathos, 'in the strawberry season every year there is an hour each day when . . . in quiet thought I go from one end of the country to the other, and unseen by them I sit by the board of those good people who sent me their names, and as they pour the rich cream over those big, salmon-tinted, oval, luscious strawberries, I have not a doubt that I enjoy the dessert more than they do. You say that it is a boasting, egotistical story. Well, I can stand that. I have been telling you how I made a vast sum of personal enjoyment by the expenditure twenty years ago of less than ten dollars. I never made so profitable and paying an investment in all my life. And the income it yields is in harmony with religion, philosophy, history, and the personal experience of every one who has tried the experiment.'

" Now, these were the two secrets of his life: the superior blessedness of giving over receiving; no day without something learned, no day without something done.

" I must be permitted to say that even after all that Dr. Storrs and Dr. Bright have said, there is a vast field left for me that neither of those gentlemen has touched,—the whole field of Dr. Prime's educational and philanthropic work outside of his editorial work. Just look at some of his books. When Allibone's 'Dictionary of Authors' came out some years ago, I purchased a copy. It was very natural for me to read the sketches of those men I knew, and of those whose works I had

read. I read in one of the volumes a notice of Dr. Prime. Lately I looked it up, and there I found I had marked it with an interrogation-point. The passage marked was this: 'Dr. Prime has published twenty-five volumes anonymously, besides the large number to which his name is given.' I knew he had published a number of volumes with his name. Now, I thought, is it possible that he could have published so many more of which I had never heard? His works may be divided into two general divisions, the educational and the philanthropical. The memorial read by Dr. Schaff refers to some of them. When Dr. Prime published his two volumes containing his 'Travels in Europe and the East,' in 1855, not every person had been to Europe, and those books were widely circulated, and very instructive; and as just a critic as Dr. Peabody, in the 'North American Review,' declared them to be very valuable as a picture of the existing state of affairs, and as a faithful record of travel. 'The Bible in the Levant' attracted great attention, and gave to the entire Christian public a full account of the wonderful work of God in that part of the world.

"Then there was one book I read in my early manhood, — the memoirs of a man the like of whom we have never had in this country, the Rev. Nicholas Murray, the inimitable 'Kirkwan.' He was a unique man; he had no parallel. That book was one of the most instructive biographies ever written. There is a gentleman in this city who has systematically read it through once every year since he first possessed himself of it, because, he says, it contains a system of principles by which a man can read human nature. He is not a minister, or a professor, or a lawyer, but a banker; not a Presbyterian, but a member of the Protestant Episcopal church. He made the remark incidentally to a member of the Evangelical Alliance.

"Take another book, 'Anderson's Annals of the English Bible, Abridged and Continued,' published by the Carters of this city. That book received the compliment of being made a basis of discussion by an eminent Unitarian clergyman of this

city. Of the other books in the educational division I will mention only one, 'Songs of the Soul.' I became acquainted with it in a peculiar way. The denomination with which I am connected undertook to revise its hymnal, and I was one of the Committee of Revision. They gave us no compensation, except the experience, and the privilege of buying all the books we wanted. We acquired a magnificent collection of hymnology. A committee was appointed to secure the books that were necessary, and for the first time in my life I saw a copy of the 'Songs of the Soul.' I read it through; and there are thirty-five hymns in the hymnal of our church which were read to the committee from this book during the process of revision, and it is worthy of the explanatory statement which it contains: 'Gathered from many lands and many ages.'

"Now take some of the philanthropic books. John G. Whittier has lately complained that though he has had a vast amount of commendation for his poetry, he is sorry that all the commendation has rested upon non-moral and non-religious poems, and he asks why this is. And recently I saw a paragraph in the 'London Christian World' referring to Whittier and Ray Palmer, and the editor says: 'It would be easy, indeed, to show from Milton and Wordsworth and many other poets that the poetic muse can draw from Hermon as well as from classic hills and founts.' Now Dr. Prime's works, many of them, had titles that would bring tears to the eyes: 'Elizabeth Thornton, the Flower and Fruit of Early Piety, published that the young may emulate it;' 'The Prodigal Reclaimed, published as a warning and as an encouragement for such as have fallen away;' and then the inimitable little book having the name of 'The Little Burnt Girl.' I will speak of one more that goes back to a time that most of us can remember; for an occasion like this brings not many of the young, though it is pleasant to see so many who are young here to-night. It had a peculiar title: 'Bosses and their Boys, or the Duties of Masters and their Apprentices.' It takes us back to the time when a young man



learned a trade living in his master's house, superintended by his master, who was oftentimes faithful to his moral interests, reminding us of the saying: 'He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length.' In this book Dr. Prime speaks of the reciprocal relations of masters and apprentices, and of the advantages to boys of apprenticeships, which he declared to be a most excellent relation. 'The Power of Prayer' was also alluded to in the memorial of the Evangelical Alliance, — a work that was translated into Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope, into the East India tongues, published in French in Paris, published in London, reaching a circulation of two hundred thousand copies, — a book that may be called a nexus between the educational and the philanthropic.

"Now let us look at the positions Dr. Prime occupied. He was for a time corresponding secretary of the American Bible Society, and also an active director of it to the very last. He was vice-president and an active director of the American Tract Society. He occupied a similar position in the American and Foreign Christian Union. At one time he was president of the Society for the Advancement of Science and Art, in this city. He was also an ex-president and trustee of the Wells College for Women. He was a trustee of his *Alma Mater*, Williams College. But a few days before his death he attended a meeting of the trustees of that college, little knowing that the place where 'the golden bowl was broken and the silver cord was loosed' was so near.

"Now, there are many men who have been connected with as many institutions as Dr. Prime. Some owe their positions entirely to their wealth, some to their personal popularity, some to the compliments bestowed upon them by their friends, and some to the mere suggestion that their names were desirable because conspicuously before the public. Now, of those men who belong to so many organizations, some never attend. They have accepted the honor, but have discharged none of the responsi-

bilities. In the next place, some seldom attend. Again, there are those who always arrive late and leave early, and never serve on sub-committees, where most of the work is done. Besides, there are persons who, though always present, never show any interest in the transactions unless there be a disturbance or a sharp debate; and happy is that Board, whether charitable, educational, or financial, that has not upon it some persons who are always present and always speak and always introduce wit, whether, to use Addison's distinction, 'true, false, or mixed,' to the great distraction of business, but never add anything at all to counsel. 'If they seem,' to quote from Saint Paul, 'to be somewhat, they add nothing in counsel.' Now, does any one ask to which of these classes Dr. Prime belonged? To none of them. He was always present except when ill, and frequently present when most others would have fancied themselves too ill to leave home. He attended strictly to the business, listened to all parts of it, served upon sub-committees, and discharged detail work accurately, fully, and promptly. He spoke often, but he spoke to the point. He has a curious passage in one of his letters which just occurs to me now, and I may not quote it accurately: 'The man who says that if he never did a great thing he is sure he never did a *long* one is my ideal, — the man for speech and action, short, sharp, and decisive.' So it was with Dr. Prime when he spoke. He attended all those meetings and always seemed to have plenty of leisure. I can speak of an acquaintance with Dr. Prime of a quarter of a century; and when I have seen him punctually in his office, coming early and going late, when I have gone into the 'Observer' office and he has wheeled around ready to converse for half an hour, and an hour if necessary, I have wondered how it could be. One of the assistant-editors told me that the only real trial to Dr. Prime was that the 'Observer' was not published twice every week, for he could not get rid of the plethora of copy he prepared. How he did it I cannot tell. He was an astonishing man in all these respects.

“ And now let me speak of one other kind of educational and philanthropic work that grew out of the editorial position. Every mail brings to an editor from three to twenty letters asking for advice, or money, or sympathy. I have answered, with two stenographers, sixty such letters in one week ; but of this I am sure, that a few years' experience could not have prepared him to do what I know on the best authority Dr. Prime did. He answered every one of those letters with his own hand, — the same hand that wrote so much copy for the paper, and that wrote those forty or fifty volumes. Though he did not avail himself of type-writers and stenographers, he answered every one of those letters, and gave away hundreds and hundreds of dollars in them. The educational work he did in those letters was great, for I have seen a letter of his, — not in preparation for this address, but shown to me years ago by the person who received it, — in which, through sixteen pages, he showed a young man what a preacher is, and tried to guide him in preparation for the holy ministry, and advised him not to join the Presbyterian Church, because he was convinced from some things he said there were some churches with which he would be in greater unity and sympathy.

“ But I must not proceed farther with these observations. I will conclude what I have to say by observing that there are four kinds of human activity for which a man must have a natural preparation : music, and the sculptor's art, and the painter's art, — these three, — and the highest forms of oratory. For these most successful men have a natural preparation. But leaving these four out of the account, the same faculties are used in science, the same faculties in business and finance, and in the duties of the theological professor or the investigator. That Dr. Prime was predestinated to be an editor I do most firmly believe, because he was one, and I also most firmly believe that he had the qualities and the faculties necessary to make an editor. But had he never left the ministry, we have the authority of Dr. Storrs for believing that, notwithstanding his

predestination to the editorship, he would have attained equal rank as a minister. Had he been a teacher, a compiler of books, a church historian, or anything else, — or even a metaphysician, — he had those common faculties, and he was a whole man at everything he undertook. Therefore he was a nucleus of life and warmth, as well as of adherence. We have in all bodies nuclei of adherence, but he was one of life and warmth. He was a centre of nervous, spiritual, social, intellectual and moral energy; and therefore he was a nourisher and a stimulator of all good things.

“I met an Englishman at the conference of the Evangelical Alliance many years ago held in this city. Dr. Wendell Prime did me the honor to invite me to ride with him while he was showing this gentleman and many others the city of Brooklyn. We took them all over the city, — to Greenwood, Prospect Park, and everything else we had to show. The Englishman said to me : —

“ ‘ Dr. Prime is an extraordinary man. I have met him in Rome, Jerusalem, London, Paris, and now I have met him here in New York; and it seemed to me on each occasion as if I had not been separated from him at all. He has a grand sympathy and community of soul, that draws your soul into him, and his soul seems to come into you. Happy,’ said he, ‘ the denomination, the church, the city, that possesses such a man.’ And then, as though he thought he ought to pay a compliment to our institutions, ‘ Happy,’ said he, ‘ are the people that have institutions that could produce such a man.’

“And this was all in harmony with plain common-sense. Dr. Prime was the best type of the past generation modified by all that is good in the present generation. He had the power of growing old gracefully, and of being in the front at the last. I called upon him once to ask him if he would name half a dozen hymns that ought to go in our hymnal. Said I, ‘ Give me half a dozen hymns that in your opinion ought to be in every hymnal.’ And this was one : —

- “ ‘ Earth’s transitory things decay ;  
 Its pomps, its pleasures pass away ;  
 But the sweet memory of the good  
 Survives in the vicissitude.
- “ ‘ As ’mid the ever-rolling sea,  
 The eternal isles established be,  
 ’Gainst which the surges of the main  
 Fret, dash, and break themselves in vain ;
- “ ‘ As, in the heavens, the urns divine  
 Of golden light forever shine,—  
 Though clouds may darken, storms may rage,  
 They still shine on from age to age,—
- “ ‘ So, through the ocean-tide of years,  
 The memory of the just appears ;  
 So, through the tempest and the gloom,  
 The good man’s virtues light the tomb.’ ”

And to-night I am here to say that that hymn is his true, appropriate requiem.”

The chairman, in bringing the proceedings to a close, requested the assembly to unite in singing three stanzas of the hymn “ Jerusalem the Golden,” after which the Rev. Edward B. Coe, D. D., invoked the benediction.

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## CHARACTER AND LIFE-WORK OF DR. S. IRENÆUS PRIME.

BY TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D.

THAT few men in the ministry or in the editorial profession were so widely or so favorably known throughout the country as our friend is apparent from the general expression of regret and sympathy with

which the news of his death was received in all quarters, and even by many who had never seen his face in the flesh. This was due partly to his natural characteristics, partly to the peculiar circumstances of his career. The first time I ever saw him was in the year 1848 or 1849, when he was one of the secretaries of the American Bible Society, and from that day to the present he has been a conspicuous figure in the eye of the Christian public. Books, letters, editorials, journeys at home and abroad, and his residence at or near the metropolis, together with his public spirit and his readiness for every good word and work, brought him into contact with all the movements of the time and made him a prominent factor in the onward march of events.

What, now, were the salient features of his character? He was not, in the common acceptation of the phrase, "a self-made man." On the contrary, he received a careful and liberal education, first in his father's house, and afterwards at Williams College and in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. He was a diligent student, not only of books, but also of men and things, and often in later years he reminded me of what the late Dr. T. H. Skinner said of Henry B. Smith, "he had more usable knowledge than any man I ever knew." His insight was keen and his memory retentive, and he knew how to lay up stores for unforeseen emergencies. His culture, if not deep, was broad, and whatever was lost for lack of specific devotion to a single subject was compensated by the width of his outlook and his general grasp of the field of knowledge in its outlines. His power of application was very great, and his mind worked easily and readily. Writing, which to many men is a labor, even in the case of some who have had

years upon years of experience, to him was rather pleasure than toil. He set about it without reluctance and finished it without weariness. He did not need to pump from a deep well; the spring burst forth of its own accord. When he turned his attention to a topic, his thoughts, apparently without an effort on his part, took shape and arranged themselves in a natural order of development. All he had to do was to clothe them in appropriate words. This he did with facility and rapidity, and, strange to say, with exceeding accuracy, so that often in a score of pages there would be no need, on a careful review, of erasing a single word. Unlike most persons he could do his best at first. In this way one can account for the enormous amount of literary composition accomplished by him in the course of his life and for its general excellence. It was not task-work, wrought under whip and spur when the mind was jaded, but rather, to use Bacon's metaphor, the first flowing of the grapes when subjected to gentle pressure. He turned the spigot, and the stream ran. Nor was it thin and watery. He wrote because he had something to say, and he said it always with perspicuity, and sometimes with uncommon weight and force. No rhetorical ornaments were sought for, but the reliance was upon the truth and appropriateness of the sentiment and the directness with which it was conveyed.

Closely allied with this power of productive work was the natural vivacity of his spirit. If ever a man knew experimentally the difference between work and worry it was he. Trials and perplexities of various kinds befell him, as they are sure to befall any one in such relations as he held, but none of them were able to clog his steps or impair his habitual cheerfulness. He

seemed to rise above them as if by an elastic bound, and move at once in a serene and cloudless atmosphere. Nature and grace concurred to produce this happy result. His sunny temperament inclined him to look upon the bright side of every matter, and his steadfast faith in a gracious and overruling Providence enabled him always to see the silver lining behind the darkest cloud. Nor was this buoyancy of spirit confined only to himself. It was contagious, and often helped to lighten the burdens of others. Dr. Prime had a rich vein of humor and an inexhaustible fund of incident and anecdote. Upon these he drew at fitting times and places, and always with success. Hence the head of an important literary institution of which our friend was a trustee, said of him after his death: "His genial sweetness and his consummate tact, in how many ways have I seen them avert disaster and confusion in matters of great delicacy and importance!" And again: "In the strife of tongues how much his wise wit seemed able to overcome!" This testimony will not seem strange to any who have mingled in social or ecclesiastical circles with him to whom it is borne. His pleasantry was natural, graceful, and without a sting. He laughed with his brethren, not at them, and they will all feel that this world is less pleasant since he was taken out of it.

But he was able, according to the apostolic precept, not only to rejoice with them that rejoice, but also to weep with them that weep. His sympathy with the sorrowing was profound and tender and unaffected. He entered thoroughly into their feelings, and was afflicted in their affliction. Manifold evidences of this are seen in his book on the "Death of Little Children," his occasional writings, and the "Letters" with which all



readers of the "Observer" are familiar. But far more are hidden in the private records of individuals and families, not only in his immediate neighborhood, but through a wide extent of country. For his position and his character made him the receptacle of tales of sorrow, often from those who knew him only by reputation. Sometimes these were accompanied by requests of a very unreasonable nature. But this fact did not chill his sympathy or dam the current of his charities. Calmly putting aside the absurd or extravagant, he ministered aid as it lay in his power, and never withheld the kind words which do good like a medicine. It is easy for one to say this, but only those who have had a similar experience can estimate the draft thus made not only on his purse, but upon his time, his hands, his feelings. Sometimes it is harder to bear others' burdens than our own. Dr. Prime, as minister and editor, had more than his share, but he carried the load as few men could, and he did it uncomplainingly and meekly.

He was a man of public spirit, and a constant friend of the great religious and benevolent and educational institutions of the age. In any important assemblage in aid of such objects he was usually seen upon the platform, not from curiosity or a love of display, but from a genuine interest in the matter in hand. His zeal was bounded by no narrow or sectarian lines; whether it were a Bible or a Tract Society, in the interest of Home Missions or of Foreign, for a college or a seminary, for the Evangelical Alliance or that of the Reformed Churches, for the advancement of literature or of science or of art, he was ready to render such service as lay in his power. And his position often enabled him to give very efficient aid both by his voice and his

pen. He was always of a catholic spirit, and although warmly attached to the evangelical system as held by the church in which he was reared and in whose communion his whole life was spent, he habitually cherished a hearty sympathy with all sister churches. And this feeling grew with his advancing years. He preferred to see points of agreement rather than those of difference, and longed for the closer fellowship of all who hold the Head. Hence, when the proposal was made to reunite the dissevered parts of the Presbyterian Church, North, he became at once a zealous and a judicious advocate of the reunion; and when the project was consummated no man rejoiced more heartily than he. So, when fraternal relations with the Southern church were restored, he was a member of the Commission which met the Southern Assembly at Lexington, Ky. His address on that occasion is said by one who was present to have been of great power through its tenderness. "He spoke of the past and conjured up its sacred memories so that old men wept." It was the eloquence of the heart, the spontaneous utterance of deep-seated convictions, and the end is not yet.

Dr. Prime was a voluminous author. His published works include records of travel, biographies, sketches, collections of letters, and treatises on religious or Scriptural subjects, some of which were translated into various languages and gained a very wide circulation. All of these do credit to his industry and his ability, for it is not an ordinary man who gives forty volumes to the press. They are pleasing and wholesome, nor is there in one of them a line which the author would now wish to blot. But his chief work was not done in these,

nor in connection with any of the important institutions of which he was president or director or trustee or fellow. His labors in such directions, although neither few nor small, were incidental. They were performed from time to time as occasion required, and then ceased. They have left their mark upon the frame-work of Christian society in this country, but his chief life-work was wrought in another field.

In years to come he will be especially remembered as the head and inspiring genius of a great religious newspaper, one that in other respects as well as years leads the rich and varied column of religious journals in America, one that has remained steadily faithful to the evangelical and catholic principles upon which it was founded, and has pursued the even tenor of its way through well-nigh three-quarters of a century. The influence of such a paper is not easy to be calculated. It enters the family and becomes a household friend. It instructs the young, and inspires and comforts the old. It forms opinion and shapes character. Its weekly visits are like the successive drops which, although singly of small importance, by dint of iteration wear away the stone. Alike in winter and summer, in the stately mansion and the rude hamlet, the moulding process goes on. They who have no books, or who, if they have them, shrink from the task of taking up a volume, yet find time to read a newspaper, and often it is the only pabulum of a literary kind that they relish. The field of a religious journal, therefore, especially if it be widely circulated, is immensely important. In this field Dr. Prime labored for five and forty years, and here he faithfully exercised all his gifts, natural and acquired.

The results show how well he was qualified for the work. He was a born editor. Not only in leading articles and in brief, crisp paragraphs, but also in all that constitutes the make-up of a newspaper he had an indescribable tact. He knew what to insert, and also — a matter equally important — what to omit. What it did not suit his convenience to treat himself he could procure to be treated by others. And so his journal was a mirror of the times, as seen from a religious point of view. It was faithful to the truth as its conductors saw it, and yet not dogmatic or denunciatory. It stood upon a platform like that of the Evangelical Alliance, and lent its powerful aid to every enterprise conceived and carried on in that spirit. Against Romanism, formalism, and all shapes of scepticism, latent or avowed, it was aggressive and intolerant. Its readers were fortified against insidious errors, and yet well supplied with positive truth in its ethical and practical aspects. Dr. Prime's long experience made him an adept in every particular of editorial management, and his associates willingly accepted his as the presiding mind of the establishment. The "Observer," as it stands to-day, and as it has stood for a generation, is his true and enduring monument, bearing, as it does, in every feature the impress of his rich and versatile genius. He made it what it is. He not only preserved the aim of its founders, but carried it out more largely and in more varied directions, so that its position and what it stands for in metropolitan journalism are known and read of all men.

But besides the general character of the paper as an outspoken champion of evangelical truth, it had a peculiar and characteristic feature in the "Letters of Iren-

æus," one of which appeared every week. They treated of every imaginable subject, and were as natural and easy and graceful as the actual correspondence of a literary man with his personal friends. Unstudied and artless, written seemingly at the point of the pen, they yet produced the effect of the highest art. Sometimes they instructed, they always interested and pleased. Their informal character allowed the writer to say anything he chose within the bounds of good sense and good taste, — bounds which he never transgressed, — and the familiar tone and skilful touch often allured the reader like one of Cowper's matchless epistles. The result was to establish a sort of relationship between the writer and his varied readers, so that each of the latter looked upon the letter as if it were addressed to himself. It was not considered as a proper subject for criticism like an ordinary editorial, but rather as a free outpouring of friendly feeling, an unstudied expression of sentiments, such as a man makes to his fellows under the seal of confidence. In this view they were eagerly welcomed and enjoyed, and I doubt not that there are thousands who said, as did a lady in the interior whom I informed of Dr. Prime's death the day after its occurrence: "Ah, I am so sorry; now we shall have no more of the letters of Irenæus." Outpourings of the heart go to the heart, and Dr. Prime was so constituted that he could reach exactly the average of his readers, going neither too high nor too low, and carrying useful suggestions in a simple and most attractive manner. Such writing seems very easy to the inexperienced, and yet in reality the ability to do it well is a very rare gift. Careless ease is the last attainment of a writer. Men who could prepare a very weighty paper for a Quarterly

Review would stumble hopelessly in the effort to reproduce the tone of familiar and intelligent conversation in a readable letter of a column's length. To be natural without being obvious, and playful without becoming silly, to teach without being tedious, and to be fresh and vivacious without extravagance, are qualities by no means common. Yet our friend had them all, and year after year he poured forth a continuous stream of such articles, never repeating himself, never falling far below his average, and often rising greatly above it.

It remains for me to say a word respecting Dr. Prime's intercourse with his ministerial brethren. This was always pleasant and helpful. It was a great gratification to him when, cut off from the possibility of having a pulpit of his own, he was able to render service on occasion to those who required aid in fulfilling their office. In advanced years the state of his health prevented this from being often done. But it rarely hindered him from attending the weekly gatherings of a clerical association in this city, now more than half a century old. Here his presence was a conspicuous and most agreeable feature. He never seemed out of spirits. His good humor was pervading and infectious. His recollections of men and things were so vivid and so ready, and his knowledge of affairs so complete and accurate that no subject was ever started on which he could not throw some needed light and give some shining illustration. His wit coruscated, his playfulness was exuberant, yet never excessive. In the greatest mirth or in reciting the most amusing incident he never forgot the dignity of a Christian minister. He was cheerful himself, and the cause of an untold amount of cheerfulness in others. There is no member of that

circle who will not feel that the joy of its fellowship has been, at least for the time, eclipsed by the removal of our genial, kind, and lively associate, whose years did not quench or lessen his vivacity, and whose experience was so varied and entertaining.





## A P P E N D I X.

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### PUBLICATIONS OF REV. S. IRENÆUS PRIME, D.D.

THIS catalogue of Dr. Prime's printed works is taken from Rev. Dr. E. D. G. Prime's volume, "Prime Family Records," printed for private use, 1888.

To say that Dr. Prime was a voluminous writer, is to give little idea of the number and variety of the productions of his pen, or of their wide circulation. In addition to his weekly writings in the "New York Observer" continued for nearly half a century, and his contributions to numerous other periodicals, he was constantly called upon to prepare papers for religious, benevolent, and literary societies and objects. Besides volumes of sermons and other selections which he edited, the following list is made up from original volumes which were written chiefly in the midst of other arduous labors. No attempt has been made to catalogue the numerous articles which he prepared for magazines and reviews. Several of his volumes were reprinted and extensively circulated in foreign countries. After nearly twenty thousand copies of one of his books on Prayer had been published in this country, it was reprinted in England, where one hundred thousand copies were sold by a single publishing house. Two distinct translations of the same book were published in France; it was issued from the press in India in the Tamil language, and in Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope.

- ELIZABETH THORNTON: The Flower and Fruit of Early Piety.  
New York: M. W. Dodd. 1840. pp. 208.
- RECORDS OF A VILLAGE PASTOR. Massachusetts Sabbath-School Society. 1843. pp. 228.
- THE PRODIGAL RECLAIMED; or, The Sinner's Ruin and Recovery. Mass. S. S. Society. 1843. pp. 220.
- THE MARTYR MISSIONARY OF ERROMANGA; or, The Life of John Williams. Abridged. American Sunday-School Union. 1844. pp. 270.
- THE LITTLE BURNT GIRL: A Memoir of Catharine Howell. Am. S. S. Union. 1845. pp. 69.
- GEORGE SOMERVILLE; or, The Boy who would be a Minister. Am. S. S. Union. 1846. pp. 88.
- GUIDE TO THE SAVIOUR. Am. S. S. Union. 1846. pp. 96.  
(Republished by the London Religious Tract Society.)
- THE OLD WHITE MEETING-HOUSE; or, Reminiscences of a Country Congregation. Robert Carter. 1846. pp. 240.
- LIFE IN NEW YORK. Robert Carter & Brothers. 1846. pp. 240.
- THE GOSPEL AMONG THE BECHUANAS and other Tribes of Southern Africa. Am. S. S. Union. 1846. pp. 296.
- THE NESTORIANS OF PERSIA; with an Account of the Massacres by the Koords. Am. S. S. Union. 1846. pp. 173.
- THE HIGHLAND PASTOR: a Sequel to George Somerville. pp. 197. Am. S. S. Union. 1847. pp. 197.
- HENRY WOOD; or, The First Step in the Downward Road. Am. S. S. Union. 1848. pp. 144.
- BOSSSES AND THEIR BOYS; or, The Duties of Masters and Apprentices. Am. S. S. Union. 1853. pp. 144.
- SABBATH SONGS: for the Use of Families and Sunday-Schools. Leavitt & Allen. 1853.
- THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE CHILDREN; with an Appendix selected from Various Authors. Anson D. F. Randolph. 1865. pp. 180.

- TRAVELS IN EUROPE AND THE EAST. With engravings. Two vols. 12mo, pp. 405, 444. Harper & Brothers. 1855.
- LETTERS FROM SWITZERLAND. Sheldon & Co. 1860. pp. 264.
- THE POWER OF PRAYER, Illustrated in the Fulton-Street Prayer-Meetings and Elsewhere. New York. Charles Scribner: 1858. The same, enlarged edition, Scribner, Armstrong & Co. 1873. pp. 418. The same, republished in London; in Paris, in French, 1859; in Cape of Good Hope in Dutch; in East Indies, in Tamil.
- THE BIBLE IN THE LEVANT; or, The Life and Letters of the Rev. C. N. Righter, agent of the American Bible Society in the Levant. New York: Sheldon & Co. 1859. pp. 336.
- FIVE YEARS OF PRAYER, with the Answers. Harper & Brothers. 1864. pp. 395.
- FIFTEEN YEARS OF PRAYER in the Fulton-Street Meeting. Scribner, Armstrong & Co. 1872. pp. 345.
- AMERICAN WIT AND HUMOR. Harper & Brothers. 1859. pp. 206.
- ANDERSON'S ANNALS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE. Abridged and continued. Robert Carter & Brothers. 1849. pp. 545.
- MEMOIRS OF REV. NICHOLAS MURRAY, D.D. (Kirwan). Harper & Brothers. 1862. pp. 438.
- MEMOIRS OF MRS. JOANNA BETHUNE. By her Son, Rev. George W. Bethune, D. D. With an Appendix containing Extracts from her Writings. Selected and edited by S. I. P. Harper & Brothers. 1863. pp. 250.
- WALKING WITH GOD: The Life Hid with Christ. A. D. F. Randolph & Co. 1872. Republished in London, 1872.
- THE ALHAMBRA AND THE KREMLIN: The South and the North of Europe contrasted. A. D. F. Randolph & Co. 1873. pp. 482.
- UNDER THE TREES. Harper & Brothers. 1874. pp. 313.

SONGS OF THE SOUL Gathered out of Many Lands and Ages.  
Robert Carter & Brothers. 1874. 4to. pp. 661.

HISTORY OF THE SIXTH GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE. Harper & Brothers. 1874. pp. 773.

LIFE OF S. F. B. MORSE, LL.D., Inventor of the Electric Magnetic Recording Telegraph. D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 776.

IRENÆUS LETTERS. Originally published in the "New York Observer." Published by the "New York Observer." Series I., 1880; pp. 400. Series II., 1885, with a sketch of the life of Rev. S. Irenæus Prime, D.D., pp. 388.

PRAVER AND ITS ANSWER, Illustrated in the Twenty-five Years of the Fulton-Street Prayer-Meeting. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1882.

Among his public addresses which were separately published are, "Address at the Opening of the Newark Library Building, Feb. 21, 1848;" "Presbyterianism in the United States of America," read at the Presbyterian General Council, Edinburgh, July, 1877; "The Church of Rome," a speech in the Presbyterian General Assembly, Saratoga, May 26, 1879; "Address on the Erection of the Franklin Statue, Printing-House Square, New York, Jan. 17, 1872;" "Address before the British Organization of the Evangelical Alliance, Bath, England, October, 1866."

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